



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

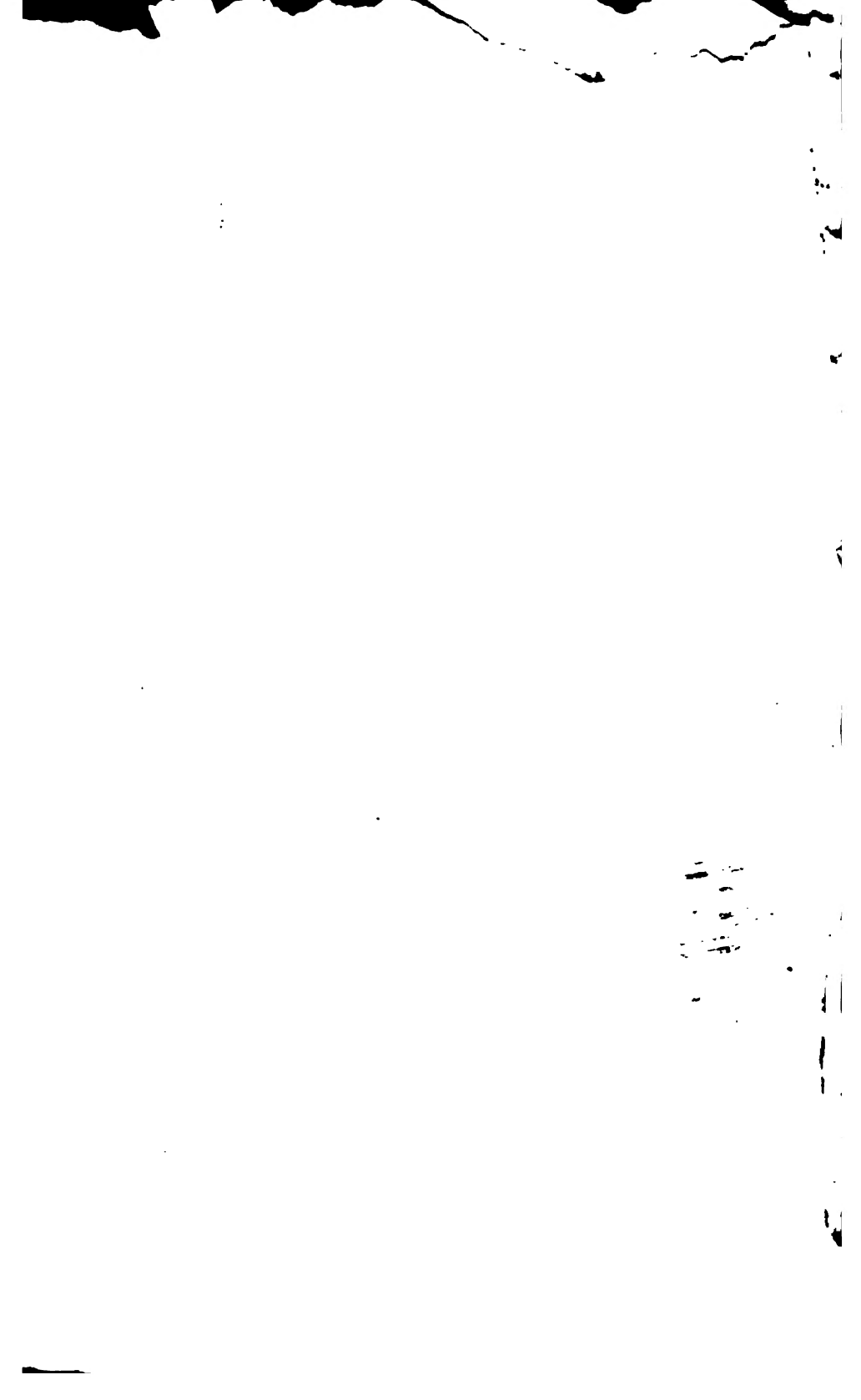
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



3433 08168382 7



THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

[illegible]







LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

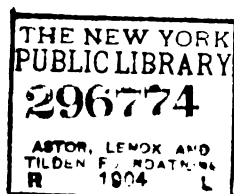


A POPULAR JOURNAL
OF GENERAL LITERATURE



VOL. LXXII.—JULY TO DECEMBER, 1903

PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
1903



COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CONTENTS



	PAGE
Adventures of Amaryllis, The	Phæbe Lyde 467
Another Man's Excuses	E. Spence de Puc 253
Avowals, Part I.	George Moore 343
Avowals, Part II.	George Moore 481
Avowals, Part III.	George Moore 608
Avowals, Part IV.	George Moore 697
Blade that Won, The. A Novel	Burton Egbert Sterenson 257
Bread on the Waters, The	Alfred Sutro 747
Eribing of the Senator, The	Josephine Dixon 367
Broken Vase, The	Marcelle Endicott 73
Brothers Implacable, The	Eleanor L. Stuart 625
Coat at the Furrier's, The	Ludwig Fulda (translated by Mrs. A. L. Wister) 704
Cook at Conley's, The	Karl Edwin Harriman 507
Crown and Sceptre, At the	Ralph Henry Barbour 617
Cupid in the Horse-Camp	Edward Boltwood 230
Day's Disdain, The	George Jones 495
Death and Life	Clinton Dangerfield 732
Fascinating of Mr. Savage, The. A Novel	Helen Milecete 641
Father Kneipp and His Cure	Maud Houce 187
For A' That	Clinton Dangerfield 239
Girl with the Banjo, The	Jean D. Hallouell 594
Green Dragon, The. A Novel	Elizabeth Duer 129
Heir to Millions, An. A Novel	Frederic Reddall 385
Hiram Mathews's Monument	Clinton Dangerfield 638
Hour of Greatness, His	Elizabeth Knight Tompkins 735
House Divided, A. A Novel	Ella Middleton Tybout 513
Jacky	Agnes Louise Provost 104
Lightweight Saddle Class, The	Alfred Stoddart 480
Man in the Tower, The	Francis Howard Williams 605
Man with the Black Spectacles, The	William Le Queux 218
Mendacity of Mr. Riggs, The	C. Yarnall Abbott 379
Miss Atherton's Wanderjahr	Mary Moss 353
Miss Turkington Did Not See Queen Victoria, How	Scumas MacManus 361
Modern Sabine, A	E. Ayrton 78
Odyssey of Piscator, The	Henry Wysham Lanier 88
Offending Eye, The	Ella Middleton Tybout 244
One Year in Nameria	Judith Underwood 622
Pastry-Knife Pass-Over, The	Mary and Rosalie Dawson 762
Presentation to Leo the Thirteenth, A	Maud Houce 459
Pretenders, The. A Novel	Ina Brervoort Roberts 1
Prison-House, The	Algernon Boyesen 501
Redwood Santa Claus, A	Jerome Case Bull 720
Return, The	Beulah Marie Dix 450
Reward of Virtue, The	Guy Wetmore Carryl 712
Roman Holiday, A	Maud Houce 60
Royal Interview with Italy's Queen, A	Maud Houce 584
Seventeenth of August, 1844, The	Marion Harland 195
Siren, The	Churchill Williams 211
Three Letters and a Note	Albertine Crandall 373
Tourist, The	Agnes Repplier 444
Unwilling Delilah, An	Ella Middleton Tybout 119
Vanderdonck Sandbank, The	Edith Robinson 112
Wife, His	Tryntje Dubois 757

POETRY

		PAGE
Admonition of the Star, The . . .	<i>Susie M. Best</i> . . .	756
Angel, The . . .	<i>Fullerton L. Waldo</i> . . .	128
Art . . .	<i>Aloysius Coll</i> . . .	506
Autumn . . .	<i>Col. Kentucky</i> . . .	624
Ballad of the Nativity, A . . .	<i>Charles Hanson Towne</i> . . .	761
Beauty in Exile . . .	<i>Arthur Chamberlain</i> . . .	103
Cañon of the Yellowstone, The . . .	<i>Mildred I. McNeal</i> . . .	111
Christmas Folk-Song, A . . .	<i>Lizette Woodworth Reese</i> . . .	756
Close of Day, At the . . .	<i>Ingram Crockett</i> . . .	217
Egypt, To . . .	<i>Alice Wilson</i> . . .	87
Fire Weed . . .	<i>Henrietta R. Eliot</i> . . .	352
Friendship . . .	<i>Marion Pelton Guild</i> . . .	384
Gift, A . . .	<i>Helen M. Richardson</i> . . .	731
Good-By . . .	<i>Ingram Crockett</i> . . .	488
How Could I Know? . . .	<i>H. Talbot Kummer</i> . . .	637
Invitation, The . . .	<i>Marie Van Vorst</i> . . .	616
Light is Woven About You, The . . .	<i>Ernest Rhys</i> . . .	77
Low-lie-down . . .	<i>Madison Cawein</i> . . .	607
Maine Road, A . . .	<i>Gertrude Buck</i> . . .	103
Morning on the Prairies . . .	<i>Ernest Raymond Simon</i> . . .	128
One Way of Looking at It . . .	<i>Frank Preston Smart</i> . . .	621
Opportunity . . .	<i>Blanche Trennor Heath</i> . . .	583
Partnership . . .	<i>Harold MacGrath</i> . . .	512
Purple Voices, The . . .	<i>Aloysius Coll</i> . . .	72
Quæritur . . .	<i>Mary Teresa Waggaman</i> . . .	593
Rebirth . . .	<i>Charles Hanson Towne</i> . . .	378
Sea at Noon, The . . .	<i>Maurice Francis Egan</i> . . .	366
Song for a Summ Twilight . . .	<i>Clinton Scollard</i> . . .	238
St. Peter's . . .	<i>Edith M. Thomas</i> . . .	449
Summer in the South . . .	<i>Paul Laurence Dunbar</i> . . .	378
Swimmer, The . . .	<i>Fullerton L. Waldo</i> . . .	186
Temple in the Field, The . . .	<i>Mildred I. McNeal</i> . . .	494
Two Generals, The . . .	<i>Sara C. F. Hollowell</i> . . .	500
Two Nurses . . .	<i>Agnes Lee</i> . . .	719
Understand, I . . .	<i>Seumas MacManus</i> . . .	59
Vagabond Road, The . . .	<i>Dora Read Goodale</i> . . .	252
Verseset . . .	<i>John Daw</i> . . .	457
Way Down in Maine . . .	<i>Florence A. Jones</i> . . .	458
Weapons . . .	<i>Meribah Philbrick Reed</i> . . .	604
Wear and Tear, The . . .	<i>Carrie Blake Morgan</i> . . .	466
Whistler, James McNeill . . .	<i>Florence Earle Coates</i> . . .	640
Wind and Snow . . .	<i>Minna Irving</i> . . .	734
Wood Voices . . .	<i>Robert Gilbert Welsh</i> . . .	194

YORK
BRARY

THE PRETENDERS

BY

INA BREVOORT ROBERTS

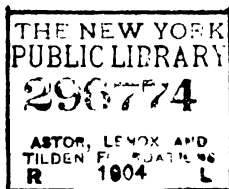
AUTHOR OF "THE LIFTING OF A FINGER"



PHILADELPHIA

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1903



**COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JULY, 1903



THE PRETENDERS

BY INA BREVOORT ROBERTS

Author of "The Lifting of a Finger"

I.

IT was one of June's rarest days. Randal North, swinging along a country road that presently would bring him into the village of Lisle, a satchel in one hand and in the other an umbrella, saw coming towards him from the opposite direction a woman who might have stepped out of a picture or a costume play.

She wore a gown of fantastically-colored silk, pink upon a white ground. The material of the dress had the quaint look of old-fashioned things, but in cut and style it was distinctly modern. Upon her head rested a hat with a broad brim and a crown that was covered with roses. In the west behind her, forming an effective background to her gayly apparelled figure, was a tiny black cloud.

Randal slackened his pace in order to lengthen the time necessary for them to meet and pass each other. He wondered if the lady would exchange greetings with him, as was the custom in that vicinity.

Apparently she did not heed his approach. She seemed to be in no hurry, but sauntered along in a leisurely fashion, her head turned towards the landscape spread out on her right, where bits of wood and smiling meadows stretched away to meet the distant mountains. Now and then she hummed snatches of song, and at intervals paused to gather some of the wild roses that grew in profusion by the roadside.

Meanwhile the cloud behind her grew blacker and blacker and rose higher and higher until it hung, ominous and threatening, above the heads of the man and the woman, who were now but a few feet apart.

As the cloud shot across the sun the lady's song died upon her lips and she glanced apprehensively up at the sky, then turned in the

direction from which she had come and prepared to fly to shelter. It was too late. At the same moment the first drops of the shower fell upon her graceful figure, poised like Atalanta's.

In a trice Randal had his umbrella unfurled and was at her side holding it over her. As she turned and looked into his face her own countenance showed a moment's perplexity and then broke into a smile.

"What kind fate sent you here to rescue my new gown?" she queried. "Did you drop from the sky or come up out of the earth?"

"Neither," Randal replied, smiling back at her, glad that she had the wit to accept the situation gracefully. "I came by way of the road, but you did not see me; your eyes were on worthier sights."

By this time the shower had begun in earnest and the air was hazy with countless ribbons of silver rain. Randal's companion drew the folds of her gown more closely about her, thus revealing two tiny feet encased in high-heeled, patent-leather slippers.

"Well, we can't stand here in the road for the rest of our lives, can we?" she remarked naively.

"That is just what I was thinking," returned the young man. "Will you take my umbrella?"

"No, I will not take your umbrella," replied she with some asperity, "but you may escort me home if you will be so kind. Do you think I would coolly march off with the only umbrella you have? (By the way, the wise man who never goes without an umbrella should take two, one for the foolish woman who never carries any.) But as I was saying, did you think I would go away with the only umbrella you have and leave you to trot along behind me, like a footman or a poodle?"

"No, I did not," returned Randal. "Still, it was my part to offer."

"And mine to refuse," said she. "So, now that we both have performed our duties, suppose we start on our way before this deluge begins to come slantwise and ruins my gown."

"Was there ever so absurd an adventure?" she continued, with a little, rippling laugh, as she laid a white hand—the one that held the roses—upon the arm Randal offered her. "Tell me, sir, did you expect, when you started on your wandering, to play the knight to a storm-caught lady? And tell me too, if I am not too curious, where you came from and whither you are bound. You do not belong in the village, of that I am very sure."

"I am bound for Lisle and the Widow Thorpe's cottage," Randal replied. "They told me in the town I left that she sometimes takes boarders."

"She does—sometimes," returned his companion. "At present I am her only one."

They were close to the edge of the village now: a little way ahead

of them white houses nestled among green trees and farther on the spire of a church rose to meet the sky.

"Then," said Randal, replying to his companion's last speech, "before I ask her to take me in I must have your assurance that I will not be an intruder."

He could see the lady's brow pucker a little as she answered: "Well, I don't know about that. Do you play the cornet?"

"No, I do not," replied Randal. "Do I look like a man who plays the cornet?" he added.

She turned her head and regarded him critically. "No, I can't say that you do," she remarked; "still, it was best to ask and be sure. Do you sing?"

"Not a note."

She considered a moment. "I think you may come," she said. "But I confess I'm very curious to know what brought you to this sleepy old place. You must have had a reason for coming."

"Yes," replied Randal, "I had a reason for coming, but I don't believe I'll tell you what it is. I am afraid unless I keep the secret of why I came here you will vote me a most uninteresting person. A little mystery redeems people as well as houses from commonplaceness."

His listener looked at him quizzically. "I don't know whether to think you clever or rude or both for evading my question," she said. "I see you know something of human nature. I confess that I, for one, have never met anyone who did not become absolutely uninteresting to me as soon as I knew all that there was to be learned about him."

Randal's companion paused in her walk and drew her hand from his arm. "If you turn down this lane at our right," she said, "and make rather a wide detour, you will come out upon this street again almost directly opposite the Widow Thorpe's cottage, with the appearance of having come from the station. I am advising you for your good. You see, the drippings from your umbrella, of which you have gallantly given me more than my share,—if, indeed, I had claim to a share,—combined with a layer of dust, have given your apparel a certain tramp-like appearance which I think Mrs. Thorpe, who is in the business of taking boarders for silver dollars and not for golden glory, will be more apt to overlook if she does not find out that you walked into the village instead of coming by train."

Randal gravely thanked her for the advice. "But the umbrella?" he said.

"You must keep that; I shouldn't know how to account for it. Anyway, the rain has almost stopped and Mrs. Thorpe's is very near; I'll be there in a twinkling. Good-by. You'll know the house by the roses."

She slipped away from his side, walking rapidly, and Randal turned into the lane at his right.

II.

WHEN North came out upon the main street again the shower was over and the sun shone upon a gem-hung world. The air was soft and warm, and only the chattering of birds broke the stillness. Down the straight, wide street the trees that bordered the narrow walks met, forming a gigantic plume against the blue of the sky, and above Randal's head a many-hued rainbow, so faint as to be almost indistinguishable, arched itself across the azure.

North opened the gate leading to a house that appeared smothered under the roses that climbed over it. The few places where there were no roses were covered by honeysuckle, and only here and there could be caught glimpses of weather-beaten boards.

The parlor into which he was shown was of the gorgeous carpet and horse-hair furniture type. The room was given an odd appearance by several incongruous articles—a fluffy parasol standing in a corner and a trim walking-hat with an eagle's feather stuck perkily in it that surmounted the glass dome protecting a stand of wax flowers. Upon the table next to these flowers and making their artificiality more striking by contrast was a rose-bowl filled with roses.

The Widow Thorpe was a plain, plump person, with hair parted and brushed primly away from her forehead and a countenance that was grave but not unkindly.

Randal concluded his arrangement without difficulty, and presently found himself in possession of a large back room on the second floor which overlooked a garden where more roses bloomed.

In the dining-room at tea-time he made the acquaintance of Mrs. Williston, the lady his umbrella had protected from the rain in the afternoon. She had changed her fantastic gown for one of white muslin. She had laid aside also her animation, and was now as demure as she had before been gay.

There was, however, a twinkle in her gray eyes as she bowed to North, and during the meal she chatted to him pleasantly across the table, sometimes moving slightly to look at him around the vase of American Beauty roses that stood in the centre of the white cloth.

Randal occupied himself with noting the contrast between his fellow-boarder and her landlady, who apparently considered Mrs. Williston, with her dainty individuality, her air and graces and wonderful city clothes, as a being from another world.

"Who was this Mrs. Williston?" Randal asked himself later in the evening as he sat by the window in the darkness of his room smoking a cigar. "Who was she and why had she brought herself and her finery to such a quiet place?"

"Where had the American Beauties he had seen on the supper-table come from? The village florist, if, indeed, the village boasted a florist, surely had not grown them. And" (his thoughts framed last the question that had come first into his mind) "was this charming woman wife or widow?"

If Randal had fancied that intercourse with Mrs. Thorpe's other boarder would be as easy and pleasant an affair as it had been on the day they had met in the road he was quickly undeceived. Acquaintance with her, in the limited sense the term implies, was not difficult, but to get from acquaintance to friendship, or even on the way to it, was another matter.

During the next fortnight Randal spent most of his time working in his room. His leisure hours were devoted to the attempt to know and understand Mrs. Williston.

To his efforts in this direction that lady proved, not averse, exactly, but singularly elusive. She did not try to avoid him: on the contrary, she seemed rather to welcome his society. She flitted before his eyes in a succession of dainty and bewitching costumes, and she chatted to him freely except when he led the conversation to personalities; then by means prettily adroit she foiled his efforts to make her talk of herself.

That Randal matched her reticence with one equally close seemed not to disturb her in the least. That her name was Mrs. Williston was all he knew of her; his name was all he had told her of himself, but apparently, according to her mind, this was quite as it should be.

On the night of his arrival North had fallen asleep to the tune of walks with his fellow-boarder along country roads in the twilight and long talks in the porch with the moon peeping through the vines.

These visions became realities in a maddeningly perverse way. He had his walks in the twilight with Mrs. Williston at his side and Mrs. Thorpe on his other hand; he had his talk in the vine-covered porch seated between the two ladies and turning to reply to each alternately.

"Do you consider a chaperon a necessary evil on all occasions?" Randal asked one afternoon as they sat in the garden (the Widow had obeyed a summons to the kitchen and they were left for a moment alone), "or are you afraid that I will steal your diamonds, that you refuse to stir farther than the front gate with me?"

Mrs. Williston looked at him, the lines of her mouth drawn into entire gravity but merriment in her eyes. "No, I do not consider a chaperon indispensable for one old and wise as I am," she said, "but Mrs. Thorpe does, and not for worlds would I run the risk of lessening the esteem with which my worthy landlady regards me. She considers me frivolous but eminently respectable, but she would soon change her opinion if I disregarded the conventions of the village. You see,

Mr. North, we are in a Rome where last-century ideas prevail, and it would be unjust to ask its inhabitants to assimilate at once the altered opinions of the present age. Emancipation of thought, like a taste for olives, must be acquired."

As she stopped speaking Mrs. Williston took up her work, a circular piece of linen with a lace edge, in the centre of which she was strewing violets so heavily embroidered as to present an embossed appearance.

A little later the pair in the garden were joined by Miss Marguerite Meeker, a young girl whom Mrs. Williston was teaching to embroider.

From his hammock Randal watched the two heads bent over their work. Both women were fair-haired and had damask-rose complexions and both were beautiful, but there the resemblance ended. Randal gave up trying to find a name for the subtle something that made the difference between them.

III.

AFTER Miss Meeker's departure Randal and Mrs. Williston were left alone once more. For a time neither spoke. Randal was watching a bevy of yellow butterflies, and his companion leaned back in her chair, her hands clasped in her lap.

When the butterflies had flown out of sight North turned his gaze upon her. "My friend, Bert Jones, says that it takes a 'real lady' to do nothing gracefully," he remarked.

Mrs. Williston laughed. "If I weren't too indolent, I would rise and courtesy to you," she said. "By the way, how are you getting on with your book?"

Randal sat up and stared at her. "My book!" he ejaculated. "How did you know—what makes you think——"

The lady's laugh rang out merrily and there was a note of satisfaction in her voice as she answered: "I recognized you at once. You see, you were pointed out to me one day in New York by a friend of mine who is also a friend of yours."

"Who was it?" inquired North.

Mrs. Williston returned his gaze calmly. "I shall not tell you," she said. "This shall be my retaliation for your refusal to answer my questions the day we met in the road. 'Revenge is sweet,' you know."

"Yes, but

'Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils,'"

quoted Randal.

His listener was obdurate. "No," she said laughingly, "recoil or no recoil, retribution I will have. A thirst for revenge is the one blot upon my otherwise noble nature."

"'Mercy is twice blessed,' you know," urged Randal. "Besides,

I had a reason for my silence. I came here to work on my book, and I did not want anyone to know——”

“That you are Randal North, the novelist,” interrupted Mrs. Williston. “Well, I don’t blame you for wanting to escape the white light of fame for awhile, but you should have confided in me.”

“You know woman’s reputation in regard to the keeping of secrets,” protested Randal.

His companion treated this speech with fine scorn.

“It is a mistake to assert that a woman cannot keep a secret,” said she. “The secrets that are entrusted to her she guards sacredly; it is only the ones she has to ferret out for herself that she publishes abroad.”

“I supposed it was the other way round,” remarked Randal jocosely.

“Well, now that the murder is out, won’t you talk to me about your work? I have all the public’s commonplace curiosity in regard to the literary workshop. How, when, and where do you write? I am eager to know too whether inspired ideas come down to you from heaven arranged on a platter ready to serve, or whether they grow out of the soil of your mind by dint of hard labor in the way of weeding and spading.”

“The latter, by all means,” returned Randal, “though, of course, the sunshine that makes idea-flowers grow is heaven-born and is just as necessary as the weeding and spading.”

“The writing of a novel seems to me a tremendous task,” remarked Mrs. Williston thoughtfully.

“It is not child’s play,” Randal replied, “but in literary, as in other work, love sweetens labor.”

“It would take an immense amount of love for the work to enable me to evolve an interesting plot and consistent characters out of the chaos of my mind. At one time I was eager to write a novel, and even began one. I suppose every woman aspires to authorship at some time in her life, just as we all long, in self-sacrificing moments, to be hospital nurses. But as I was saying, I began to write, and even plodded through several books on the subject of literary technique. A sentence from one of them I remember still, ‘It is not hard to convey ideas, but it is by no means easy to be sure that they will arrive at their destination in good order.’ Do you ever experience this difficulty? Love-scenes now—aren’t they the hardest things in the world to do?”

Randal reflected a moment.

“To write a love-scene, particularly a proposal, that is neither sentimental nor hopelessly artificial is not easy,” he said. “I usually solve the difficulty by making them short and direct, letting my readers’ hearts furnish the sentiment. Of course, a writer cannot have the

advantage of listening to many proposals, and so must draw upon his imagination and his memory of other books for those he puts into his novels, but I fancy my method comes close to realism." Randal was talking fast and eagerly. "I feel quite sure," he went on, "that no matter how ardent and eloquent a speech a lover may previously have composed, when the crucial moment comes his eloquence flies to his eyes and his plea is couched in the simple words: 'I love you. Will you be my wife?'"

"'I will,' says she," cried Mrs. Williston gayly. "After a proper amount of hesitation, of course," she added.

"Exactly," returned Randal. "Then all I have to do is to announce the engagement."

"Now if I were a reporter," cried Mrs. Williston, "what a fine lot of 'copy' I should have garnered this afternoon! However, even if I were one, I think you would be safe, for I am in your debt. Did you not save a new gown of mine from utter destruction, and could anything lay me under greater obligation? But it is growing late and I must dress for tea," she concluded, rising as she spoke.

"It seems to me you look very nice already," observed Randal, surveying her dainty frock of flowered muslin.

"There's not much to do here but dress," she answered plaintively. "I've joined the Ladies' Aid Society and several other church organizations, and I return the calls of the inhabitants with praiseworthy promptness, considering what bores they are. I also teach a class in Sunday-school and supply embroidery patterns for the 'Woman's Page' of the *Lisle Weekly Gazette*. And still there are unemployed hours to hang heavily on my hands. I am reduced to changing my gown several times a day merely to kill time. Oh, yes, and to reading your books," she added. "I sent to town for a set of them."

"Was that what the box contained that I carried from the station on the warmest day we've had?" questioned Randal in a disgusted tone.

His companion nodded. "Did you find them heavy?" she inquired.

"As lead."

"Oh, fie!" cried the laughing Mrs. Williston, "I wouldn't say that about my own books if I were you."

IV.

It was some time later that Randal on coming from the post-office with the mail looked about for Mrs. Williston and found her in the prim parlor.

He handed her a bundle of letters and a package which he knew contained flowers. Every day since his arrival his fellow-boarder had received a similar one, the only variation to the occurrence being that sometimes the box was large and held roses and sometimes it was

small and sheltered violets. Randal wondered whether the sender were lover or husband, but he never gained courage to ask the question.

To-day the absent one's offering was violets. Having made a journey to the kitchen and brought back the rose-bowl filled with water, Randal sat down by one of the screened windows, Mrs. Williston took her place at the other, and the two proceeded to open their letters.

It was cool and pleasant in the still parlor, where a sedate little breeze and bars of netted sunshine entered together. The quiet was broken only by the rustling of paper and, coming from a distance, the faint lowing of cattle.

Mrs. Williston, having finished the perusal of her letters, took up the *Lisle Weekly Gazette*, which Randal had placed upon the table. A moment later the peaceful stillness was shattered by a scream.

"What is it?" cried Randal, rushing to his companion's side.

Mrs. Williston held the paper out to him. "Read!" she cried, "and tell me that my sight has played me false. There, at the top of the second page."

Randal took the paper and read:

"The GAZETTE takes great pleasure in announcing the engagement of Mrs. Cynthia Williston, the fair lady who has graced our town with her presence during the past month, to Mr. Randal North, who came to Lisle about a fortnight ago. The GAZETTE hopes to be in a position to furnish further information concerning this interesting pair of lovers in an early issue. At present they have not only our heartiest congratulations, but also, we feel safe in saying, the good wishes of every one of our readers."

The paper dropped from Randal's hands. "It's an outrage," he cried, and, taking up his hat, rushed out of the house and down to the office of the *Lisle Weekly Gazette*.

Being shown into the editor's room, he found that personage enjoying a cigar with his feet on a desk and the glow of a "How-pleasant-is-Saturday-night-when-you-are-editor-of-a-Saturday-evening-paper" expression suffusing his countenance.

"I demand to know by what right you have dared to take liberties with Mrs. Williston's name and mine," began Randal. "What do you mean by printing such a lie?"

The editor looked up at the speaker with a perplexed face. "Do you mean the item announcing your engagement?" he asked. "Is that a lie?"

"Certainly it is," replied Randal, "a monstrous one—one you shall suffer for."

The editor's face relaxed into an inscrutable smile. "Tom," he called,—*"Tom Halliday."*

A callow young man appeared in the doorway.

"Did you call me?" he inquired.

"Yes," replied the editor. "Wasn't it you who turned in the paragraph announcing Mrs. Williston's engagement to this gentleman?"

"I guess it was."

"Will you kindly tell him where you got your information?"

The young man stared at Randal a moment; then he grinned.

"This afternoon," began Halliday, "I went to the Widow Thorpe's to ask Mrs. Williston to give us some patterns for the 'Woman's Page,' as she has done several times before. The Widow told me I would find Mrs. Williston in the garden, so I started round the house. I had gone as far as Mrs. Thorpe's big bridal-wreath bush when I heard Mr. North's voice say, 'I love you; will you be my wife?' and Mrs. Williston answered, 'I will.'"

"I was taken by surprise, you may be sure," continued Halliday, turning to the editor. "I was stealing quietly away when I heard Mr. North say, 'Then all I have to do is to announce the engagement.'"

"Was that all you heard?" Randal demanded sternly. "Tell the truth now."

"I am not accustomed to having my word doubted," said the young fellow with dignity. "Yes, that was all I could distinguish. I heard murmurs, but they were so low that I did not catch the words. I didn't try to listen anyway; I wasn't to blame, because you talked so loudly."

"I am sorry our paragraph annoyed you," put in the editor. "We intended it as a pleasant surprise. The *Gazette* has printed the announcement of every engagement in the village since the paper started. We generally get paid for it too,—advertising rates,—but out of compliment to Mrs. Williston we put that notice in gratis."

"I think it was most officious of you to print it at all without permission," said Randal.

The editor was beginning to lose his temper. "It seems to me that instead of abusing us you ought to be grateful to us for not publishing the details of the affair," he remarked. "That is what we would have done if we were as enterprising as we ought to be."

"I was just aching to work in that bridal-wreath bush," observed Halliday.

Randal's eyes absently followed the movements of a bee buzzing about in the sunshine that poured in at the uncurtained window. The novelist's feelings at this juncture do not admit of description.

What to say, how to set about repairing the mischief in which fate seemed to be the chief conspirator, Randal did not know. He thought the best plan would be to explain the mistake and get the newspaper people to contradict the paragraph, but he decided not to commit him-

self to any course of action until he had consulted with Mrs. Williston. In the meantime tact was the thing to be employed.

He turned to the editor and held out his hand.

"There has been a mistake," he said,—“a serious mistake,—but I think it better to defer explanations until I have talked with Mrs. Williston. I shall come in again.

“As for you,” Randal went on jocosely to Halliday, “you are wasting your talent. You should start for New York at once, for you are eminently fitted to be a reporter on the yellowest of yellow journals.”

With these words Randal left the office, feeling that he was making a most inglorious exit. As the door closed behind him he heard Halliday say to the editor:

“Well, I never! Do you suppose he’s crazy? He must be. No man in his senses would shout out a proposal at the rapid-firing-gun rate as he did.”

V.

ON reaching the cottage Randal found the ladies at tea. He took his place at the table, and the meal was conducted with an appearance of placidity that covered much mental disturbance.

After it was over Randal escaped as soon as he could from Mrs. Thorpe’s questions as to what he thought the morrow’s weather would be and followed Mrs. Williston to the garden.

“Well?” she said as he came up with her.

“It is worse than anything we could have imagined,” declared North.

Mrs. Williston received his account of the interview with such evident consternation that he found himself taking an optimistic view of the situation in an effort to console her.

“My dear lady, don’t take this affair so to heart,” he urged. “It is unfortunate, of course, but, still, not beyond remedy. It seems to me that the best thing to do is to make a clean breast of the matter to that editor and ask him to publish a second paragraph saying that the announcement was due to a mistake, trusting to his honor not to divulge anything further. I think he may be trusted, but if we were in a town that boasted rival newspapers, God help us!” concluded Randal fervently. “The matter would be beyond human power to rectify.”

Mrs. Williston did not respond. She was pacing the gravelled walk in a state of agitation.

Randal renewed his efforts to soothe her. “Of course, all this is most unfortunate,” he said for the second time, “but, after all, it might be worse. Suppose Lisle did boast rival newspapers. As it is, I presume we must make up our minds to be martyrs until the next issue of the *Gazette* puts an end to congratulations. But a week will soon pass, and before long I don’t doubt we shall be ready to have a good laugh over

the strange prank fate has played upon us. Unless we choose to tell, no one outside the village need know about that paragraph. Fortunately, Lisle papers do not travel far."

A low cry broke from Mrs. Williston as she sank down upon a bench and buried her face in her hands. Randal sat down beside her. "My dear Mrs. Williston," he said, "don't take this matter so much to heart."

His companion looked up quickly. "Oh, you do not know; I am almost afraid to tell you," she half moaned, adding desperately: "A copy of that paper has gone to at least a dozen of my friends and relatives. You see, they all expected me to write to them, and as I came here to be quiet and to get away from everyone I didn't want to be bothered, so I just gave their names to the editor of the *Gazette* and told him to have a copy mailed to each of them every week. There is always something in the paper about me, and I thought in that way they would hear that I was well without my being put to the trouble of writing."

"The devil!" Randal came near saying, but whistled instead.

"Worst of all, one of the friends is a New York editor," Mrs. Williston resumed.

Randal drew a long breath. "That complicates matters," he said.

"Complicates them!" cried Mrs. Williston. "Do you realize that within a day or two that paragraph will be copied by every paper in the country? Have you forgotten that you are famous?"

Randal groaned inwardly, but tact would not allow him to let his companion see that he was disturbed by what she had told him. "What shall we do about it?" he asked.

"The first thing to be done is to punish the *Gazette* people," declared Mrs. Williston savagely.

"That will not be an easy matter, I am afraid," returned North.

"What!" cried his companion. "Do you mean that we cannot make them suffer? We must sue them for libel or—or something."

Randal smiled. "I fear any effort to punish the paper would only make matters worse for ourselves," he said. "You see, the publicity we want to avoid is the very thing a newspaper courts. There are some things it is wiser not to attempt, and getting even with a newspaper is one of them. I don't see that we can do anything but let the matter rest as it is. After all, it will not do us any harm to have the outside public believe we are engaged: we can explain to the people to whom it really matters."

"And be laughed at," said Mrs. Williston gloomily.

Randal rose and began to walk up and down with the air of a man who has struck the vein of a new idea.

"Is your husband living?" he inquired briskly.

"No," returned she, "he has been dead three years.

"That's a pity," said Randal, and a moment later regretted his speech as heartless. It seemed unkind to wish the defunct Mr. Williston back in a world of trouble merely because his being alive would simplify matters.

There was a little silence before Randal paused before his companion, hesitating in what he had made up his mind to say.

Mrs. Williston looked at him and apparently divined his difficulty. "What is it?" she asked. "Do suggest some way out of the awful dilemma."

Thus encouraged, Randal broached his plan.

"Why not allow people to believe we *are* engaged?" he said.

Mrs. Williston's perplexed frown gave place to a delighted smile. "That's just the thing," she cried. "Why didn't we think of it before. We can keep up the pretence for awhile and then declare the engagement broken. It will be rather fun, won't it,—fooling people?"

"It will involve an immense amount of deceit," remarked Randal.

"And a good deal of clever acting. I wonder if we can carry it through?" Mrs. Williston had grown thoughtful.

"We can but do our best," replied Randal smilingly. "I would suggest that we let absolutely no one into the secret; that will be the only safe way. Indeed, I think it would be as well to try to accustom ourselves to think of the engagement as genuine while it lasts."

The corners of Mrs. Williston's mouth drooped mischievously, but she kept her face grave as she answered: "That seems rather unnecessary; still, if you think it best—I feel rather like a culprit in the matter because it was through me that the paper left Lisle, so I am willing to adopt whatever course you deem wise. I think you are quite right in saying that we must guard our secret carefully. You have my promise that I will tell no one."

"And you have mine," declared Randal. "But the man who sends you flowers every day," he added, "ought not he to know the truth?"

Mrs. Williston avoided his glance.

"No," she said. The word was spoken slowly, and North fancied with regret.

After this a silence fell upon the pair. The dusk was deepening and one or two stars, pale and bright, twinkled in the heavens. The moon had risen and was lending its beauty to the rose-covered house and blooming garden.

The pause was broken by Mrs. Williston. "This seems an ideal place for a romance," she said. "Who would dream it could be the scene of a tragedy?"

Randal laughed. "You are uncomplimentary," he observed. "Why not call it a comedy?"

Mrs. Williston laughed too. "After all, the affair is neither comedy nor tragedy," said she, "but just a ridiculous farce."

"Farce-comedy," corrected North.

She shook her head. "At present the affair is a farce: it does not appear what it shall be. I must go into the house now. My conscience tells me Mrs. Thorpe is accusing poor, innocent Janet of losing the paper I hid so carefully this afternoon."

"How surprised and pleased our worthy landlady will be," remarked Randal as they moved along the path.

Mrs. Williston grew faintly pink. "Don't!" she said, putting up a protesting hand. "Are you coming in?" she asked as they reached the door of the house.

"Not just yet," replied Randal. "I want to smoke a cigar and think over the amazing situation in which I find myself."

Mrs. Williston had disappeared within the house and North was on his way to the garden when he heard her call him. He turned and went back to the porch where she stood.

"How long is this farce, or farce-comedy, or whatever you choose to call it, to last?" she inquired.

"That is for you to decide," Randal answered. "You may throw me over when you think best."

The lady on the porch gazed down at him with a face full of laughter. "I see," she murmured. "You won't be so ungallant as to jilt me. Well, that is nice of you." A moment later she had vanished.

Randal had finished his cigar and was thinking of going into the house when he heard a slight noise from above. The next instant a red rose fell at his feet. He looked up just in time to see a white hand disappear before a closing shutter.

His face was thoughtful as he went into the house, carrying the flower with him.

VI.

ON the following morning at breakfast Mrs. Thorpe performed what she afterwards described to a neighbor as the ceremony of congratulating the happy pair.

"It was mighty clever of you to pretend you didn't know each other, so none of us would suspect you were lovers," she said.

The day was Sunday, but neither Randal nor Mrs. Williston could be induced to go to church, so Mrs. Thorpe went alone. At dinner she entertained her boarders by telling them what various people had said concerning their engagement. She must have discussed it with every member of the congregation, they agreed afterwards.

During the meal Randal in speaking to his supposed fiancée

addressed her as Mrs. Williston. "Now, you must not be formal just because of me," cried Mrs. Thorpe, beaming upon them; "just pretend I'm not here."

"It's going to be worse than we thought," observed Mrs. Williston plaintively when the meal was over and she and North were alone together.

Their troubles, it seemed, had scarcely begun. A few evenings later they were "surprised" by a party consisting of the village "first families." These good people, who had brought with them a liberal supply of refreshments, proceeded to pass a pleasant evening.

They played games in which the minister joined, and after supper sang college songs and hymns, Mrs. Williston accompanying them upon Mrs. Thorpe's melodeon. Throughout the evening the Widow's boarders were subjected to a string of congratulations.

It was not long before a deluge of letters and marked newspapers addressed to one or the other of the pair began to pour into the Lisle post-office. The newspapers devoted much space and large type to heralding the engagement.

It gave North a distinct shock to read: "Genius and millions to wed. Cynthia Williston, the widow of a millionaire, to become the wife of Randal North, one of the foremost novelists of the day."

"Is this true?" Randal cried, turning to Cynthia. She read the notice from where she sat and nodded.

"I'll be branded as a fortune-hunter," he said gloomily. "I never thought of your being *the* Mrs. Williston."

This speech aroused his listener's temper a trifle. "Don't imagine you're the only one likely to have an uncomfortable time of it," she flashed; "read these."

Randal took the letters she held out to him, and when she had gone into the house settled himself in his chair and attacked the correspondence.

The first letter he opened was written in a sprawling feminine hand on paper with a large monogram. It read:

"DEAREST CYNTHIA: Well, I am surprised. I confess I can't imagine where you met this Randal North, or when you've had a chance to get well enough acquainted with him to be sure you're in love without my finding out that you knew him. I suppose you do love him or you wouldn't be engaged, for you are a romantic creature. [Randal raised his eyebrows; he would never have thought of calling Mrs. Williston romantic.] Do write us the particulars of the affair.

"Your sister Sarah is furious because she heard of your engagement from strangers—the Dalrymples, who saw it in

the papers. She thinks you should have confided in her. She says too much money always makes people queer.

"Do write soon and tell us all about him.

"Your affectionate and envious cousin,

"MABEL.

"P.S.—I suppose he'll be at your house party."

It was with varying sentiments that Randal read the rest of the letters. There were tender epistles from women who had not left bridedom far behind them. These asserted that they could wish "dear Mrs. Williston" nothing greater than "happiness like mine;" there were romantic notes, obviously from young girls, and there were other letters as obviously from people who were recipients of the Widow's bounty, in which she was wished "as much happiness as can fall to the lot of mortal."

Near the bottom of the pile was a letter from "sister Sarah." It was plaintively complaining, as if the writer felt that whatever she might say would be futile, yet disliked to deny herself the pleasure of recounting her wrongs. In a postscript was a request for a loan of one hundred dollars.

Randal decided that Mrs. Williston must have given him this letter by mistake. There were also one or two others he told himself she could not have intended him to read.

Monotonous as the perusal of someone else's correspondence had become, Randal read with interest the three neatly written pages of the last letter:

"MY DEAR CYNTHIA: I must begin by telling you that I was no less astonished than the others when I heard of your engagement. I am glad you are going to be married, for I think you need someone to take care of and be good to you. And surely Mr. North will do both,—that is, if he is the man who wrote his books, and I guess he is, though you might ask him to be sure.

"I send you statements of last month's accounts with the checks attached all ready to sign. The dogs are well and so is Cleopatra. I exercise her every fine day, as you asked me to do. Let me know when you are thinking of coming back.

"I am afraid your sister is deeply hurt at your omitting to write her of your engagement, but I think a little note of apology from you would make matters all right again. Will you pardon me for suggesting this?

"Yours with love,

"MARIAN."

"Who is Marian?" North asked later of Mrs. Williston.

"A cousin of mine, a young woman who is ridiculously independent," replied that lady. "When her parents died and left her penniless

she would accept help from no one, but set about earning her living. I finally induced her to come to live with me only by letting her assume the position of head housekeeper. Did you read her letter? Think of her suggesting to me to apologize to Sarah! Because Marian actually enjoys doing her duty she imagines everyone is like her. Well, the opportunity to take her advice will not be long lacking. Oh, by the way, this came a little while ago." Mrs. Williston handed North a yellow envelope she had been holding in her hand.

"Bad news?" she inquired as she watched him reading the telegram.

"Oh, no, it's from my friend, Bert Jones. He says: 'Just got back from a yachting trip and heard the news. Will arrive in Lisle by the afternoon train to see whether I can give my consent.' That's good news," concluded Randal; "Bert's almost the best friend I have."

"And the best one?" queried Mrs. Williston.

"Is the finest man living," said Randal warmly. "I'll tell you about him some day."

"Well, I had a telegram too, but mine contained anything but good news. My sister Sarah will be here by the afternoon train also. When I tell you that we never by any chance think alike on any subject you will scarcely wonder at my not being overjoyed."

"Why need you dread her coming?" inquired Randal, laughing. "You impress me as a person quite capable of taking your own part."

"Oh, I can do that well enough," returned Cynthia carelessly, "but it gets tiresome quarrelling all the time. I'm going to walk to the station to meet Sarah," she added, rising.

"I'll come too if you'll allow me," said North.

VII.

WHEN the afternoon train pulled into the Lisle station two passengers alighted from it: Miss Meadows, tall and angular, and following her, brown, immaculately attired, and smiling, Mr. Bertram Jones.

"North, my dear fellow, how are you?" cried the latter, giving Randal's hand a hearty shake. "And so you're caught at last. You see, I lost no time in coming to sympathize—I mean rejoice—with you. I'm simply dying to see the fair one."

"Hush," cautioned Randal with a slight motion towards the spot where Mrs. Williston was holding up her cheek for her sister to kiss. Before the round "Oh!" which Mr. Jones's lips formed had time to become audible Randal had started in the direction of the pair.

Cynthia was wearing white muslin. Her rounded arms were bare to the elbow, and a flutter of pink ribbons lent a pleasing touch of color to her costume.

"This is Mr. North, Sarah," she said. "Mr. North, my sister, Miss

Meadows." Miss Meadows bowed stiffly, North introduced his friend, and the four started in the direction of the cottage.

To North that walk seemed part of the rest of the unreality. There were times when he half expected to awake and find that the rose-covered cottage, his fair fiancée, and his odd engagement were part of a pretty, humorous dream.

During the evening Mrs. Williston talked to Mr. Jones, leaving Randal to devote himself to her sister. Under the impression that the topic could not fail to be interesting to him, Miss Meadows talked to North about little but his fiancée, apparently expecting to hear lover's rhapsodies and plainly disappointed because none were forthcoming.

"I suppose Mr. North will be one of your house party," she said during the evening to Cynthia, who was talking with Mr. Jones at the other end of the porch.

Mrs. Williston looked inquiringly at North. "I suppose he will, of course," she said.

"Of course," replied Randal lamely, and thought with dismay of his unfinished book. Something of this feeling must have crept into his tone, for there was laughter in the look Mrs. Williston bestowed upon him.

"Can you not come too, Mr. Jones?" she asked. "The Browns will be there and Mrs. Chase and her daughters. Mr. Jones and I have been finding out that we both know some of the same people," she added to Randal. "Besides," she went on, turning to Bert again, "as far as I know Mr. North is not acquainted with any of the people who are to be my guests, and I am afraid he may be lonely among so many strangers."

"Lonely!" cried Bert, with a glance that said plainly, "With you there!"

"Perhaps I ought not to confess it, but I forget very often that I am engaged," she remarked demurely.

"Of course, you will go back to The Cedars with me to-morrow, Cynthia," put in Miss Meadows at this moment.

"I may; still, I hadn't thought of it."

The spinster replied only by a prim setting of her lips, but presently she drew near her sister and Randal heard her say in an aside: "Cynthia, you must not stay here now that you're engaged to Mr. North? Don't you know that people will talk?"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Williston calmly with no lowering of her voice, "I think I have noticed that most members of the human family have an inclination that way. I've always wondered why I like dumb animals better than people, and now I know. Well, I've already had my share of the world's attention since I became engaged, so I think I'll go with you, Sarah. When may we expect you?" she went on with a glance that included both men.

Bert looked at Randal, who replied: "Not before the tenth of July. I have a friend coming from Europe about that time, and I want to be in New York to meet him. After that I am——"

"Yours to command," finished Bert as North hesitated. "Oh, I hope you will lead him a dance, Mrs. Williston. North has always been superior to the rest of us fellows, so above all flirtations and love affairs, that I would be rather pleased if you turned out to be shrew or something equally interesting. Perhaps it is wicked but I've cherished a sort of hope that when Randal found his ideal woman she would prove to have faults just as other women have."

There was mirth in the glance Mrs. Williston shot at North. "You are rather unkind, are you not?" she said to Bert.

When the ladies had gone upstairs the two men went into the garden to smoke.

"My dear boy, she is simply adorable," observed Jones as he lit his cigar; "she looks like a girl of eighteen and is charming as a woman of thirty. But I must say I don't think you make a very good lover; you are too indifferent, too cold. Now, with such a sweetheart I'd be a regular Romeo. She must be fabulously wealthy too! Rich, beautiful, and charming—by Jove, North, you're in luck! I imagine there will be some pleasant people at her house party."

"I suppose so," returned North, but he spoke without enthusiasm.

His friend uttered an exclamation of amazement.

"Well, you show about as much interest as if the affair were to be held at the North Pole in the middle of winter. For shame, North!"

Randal laughed. "You should hear my side of the case before you judge me," he said. "How much work do you suppose I'll be able to accomplish, and if my book isn't finished when fall comes, what am I to say to my publishers?"

"Hang the publishers! That's what I'd say if it came to a choice between writing a love-story and living one."

VIII.

RANDAL sat with his friend, Doctor Gordon, in the latter's private office. Outside the open window the roar of the day's traffic was sinking into the hush that twilight brings, even in the heart of a city.

Inside the room the shadows made indistinct long rows of shelves filled with books, glass cases of instruments, and a massive, flat-topped desk. The two men sat in huge leather chairs that from the habit of other days were drawn up before the empty fireplace. The evening was still and sultry.

"It's good to be at home again," remarked the Doctor, breaking a long silence. "It's funny how when a man's been abroad his whole native land seems like his own especial property."

"You'll find the city pretty dull just now," observed North; "everyone is away."

"Shall you remain in town?" inquired the Doctor.

"No, I'm off to-morrow. I'm due at a house party," replied Randal. "I suppose you haven't heard the news of my engagement," he added after a pause.

The Doctor stared at him, his eyes opened wide and in his rugged face doubt and incredulity. "So you are going to be married," he murmured, half to himself. "I am glad for your sake, though I can't help a little regret on my own account. But, after all, a single existence is but half a life. No house is ever home to a man unless the woman he loves shares it with him. I hope you will keep a corner for me at your fireside. I shall like to visit you when you are married."

North stirred impatiently. If Mrs. Williston's willingness to treat lightly matters he had always regarded as little less than sacred jarred upon him, his friend's attitude made him feel like a hypocrite. Had he known beforehand the false positions this sham engagement would place him in he felt that he would hardly have had courage to suggest it. And yet, what other course had been open to him? Even though he had felt equal to bearing the publicity which must have come as the result of an explanation of the *Gazette's* paragraph, he could hardly have convinced himself that it would be honorable to ask Mrs. Williston to share it.

At the time the plan of seeming to be engaged had presented a simple and easy way out of an awkward predicament; he had not counted on scenes like this.

"Tell me about her," said the Doctor, breaking in upon Randal's somewhat bitter reflections. "What is she like, this woman you love?"

"You want me to describe the woman I am engaged to?" North queried, and paused, the other's question repeating itself in his mind like the refrain of a song, "What is she like, this woman you love? What is she like, this woman you love?" Ah, he did not know that, he told himself. As yet she existed only as an ideal; he could but dream of her and wonder if somewhere in the world she waited for him.

"My fiancée is young and very good-looking," he said aloud.

The Doctor burst into a roar of laughter. "What a description for a lover!" he cried. "Why, I would say as much as that for one of my patients. Come, North, tell me about her. Remember, I'm not an ordinary acquaintance, but your friend. You need not be afraid to talk to me."

"It is not that," said North, turning to smile at his host, "but—well, for one thing, my eloquence does not run to verbal descriptions; for another, to describe her would not be easy. She is not like other women."

The Doctor rubbed his hands together. "Ah, that sounds better," he said in a tone of satisfaction. "Of course, she is not like other women to you; if she were, you wouldn't have asked her to be your wife. But what sort of a mind has she? Is she literary, fashionable, or philanthropic?"

Randal reflected a moment. "She is all and yet none of the three," he said. "She reads a good deal, and yet I would hesitate about calling her literary; I wouldn't be afraid to wager that she does a vast amount of good with her money, but she is not a philanthropist; and—yes, she is fashionable, even ultra-fashionable, but in a way individually her own."

"Upon my word, I don't know whether you are in love with her or not," ejaculated Gordon, knitting his brows, "and yet I know you are not the man to marry for anything but love."

Randal frowned. This would not do, he told himself; it was certainly not fair to Mrs. Williston, since he must pose as her lover, to let even his best friend think him a half-hearted one. He was about to say that Cynthia was charming, fascinating, to utter something distinctly in her praise, when the Doctor cut in ahead of him.

"Randal, have you ever suspected me of being in love?" he asked abruptly.

"You!" ejaculated North, laughing. "Doctor Alexander Gordon, the coolest-headed, surest-handed surgeon in the city! Yes, I have not only suspected, but convicted you of being in love—with your profession, with operations and instruments."

"For eight years I have loved a woman with my whole heart," the Doctor said quietly. "I have never told you this before because—well, it is not easy for a man in love to give his confidence to another man who has never cared for anyone, even though that man be his best friend."

Randal did not reply.

It was the Doctor who broke the silence. "I am glad your love-affair is a happy one," he said; "that you will not know what it is to have your heart filled with a love that is hopeless."

"She has refused you?" ventured North, wondering how any woman could refuse the love of such a man.

"No, I have not asked her to marry me. I hold that it is scarcely honorable, and certainly not kind, for a man to put a woman to the pain of a refusal when he knows that she does not care for him."

"You are sure of that?"

"Oh, yes. To others she is gay and frank; with me she is reserved and quiet and—and deferential. It's the last that hurts. It tells so plainly that she honors the surgeon, but does not love the man. I sometimes think she has guessed my feeling for her and is afraid of seeming to give me encouragement."

Randal began to laugh softly. "Ah, Doctor, Doctor, with all your scientific research, you have left out the study of the feminine heart. No matter whether she treats you well or ill, if she treats you differently from the way she treats other people, you have reason to hope."

"Do you think so?" queried the other man, a new note in his voice. "If I could believe that——"

"You'd go to her and ask her to be your wife," finished Randal briskly. "Well, that is just what I advise you to do."

The Doctor rose and began to pace the room. "I have half a mind to do as you suggest," he muttered. "You have awakened a hope I thought was dead. Ah, I don't dare to think of my happiness if she should say 'Yes,' of the sunshine she could bring into my life. I wish I could describe her to you, Randal. She is not like other women: she reminds one of a golden-winged butterfly. Sometimes I think she is not a woman at all, but a being half angel, half fairy. She has all an angel's goodness, all a fairy's charm." The Doctor paused before one of the windows, his huge frame shutting out the moonlight.

Randal was silent from amazement. Could this be the Doctor Gordon he had thought he knew so well? Randal was finding out what he had learned many times before, the knowledge having on each occasion the novelty of a fresh discovery—that to a student of life the human heart never ceases to offer revelations.

Gordon left his position by the window and came back to his chair. "I expect you're putting me down as a garrulous old imbecile," he said, speaking in the half-ashamed fashion of a boy who has been betrayed into one of a boy's rare exhibitions of emotion. "Well, a man must grow talkative once in a lifetime," he went on, stretching an arm over to a table for his pipe and proceeding to light it. "And I'm not sorry you have my confidence; you will respect it, I know."

"Yes." After Randal's monosyllable there was a little silence.

Presently the Doctor rose and pressed a button in the wall that flooded the room with light. "There, that's better," he said. "The moonshine has been going to our—or rather to my—head; we've been as romantic as a couple of girls. I'll ring for Barker, and we'll have a bottle of something cold."

"Sometimes," the Doctor began, when he had given his order and the servant had gone away, "I allow myself to think of what it would be like to see her in this great house, coming down the stairs to meet me in one of the marvellous gowns she always wears, sitting beside me here or—— But enough of this; you must be tired of hearing about her. But I'm going to take your advice, Randal, and ask her to marry me."

"When the wine comes we'll drink to the success of your wooing," said North, speaking warmly.

IX.

"UGH! how bare this room looks," exclaimed the Doctor a moment later. "A dismantled apartment is always conducive to sentiment, I believe."

He lifted a travelling-bag from the floor to the table. "If you don't mind," he said, "I'll take out some of my traps and make this place look a little more homelike."

Randal watched his host unpack one instrument after another and place them in the glass cases. "You take an odd way of making the place look homelike," he remarked.

Doctor Gordon patted a shining bit of steel lovingly. "I don't depend altogether upon these things for decoration," he said, laughing. "I have a lot of gimcracks to fix up this room with,—a rug made from the skin of a tiger I shot in Africa and some fine curios,—but they are in my trunk. Oh, that reminds me—I brought you a trifle, and I think I remember putting it in this bag. I had an idea you'd be on hand to welcome me."

The Doctor was tumbling the contents of the bag about recklessly when he was stopped by a smothered exclamation from Randal. Gordon glanced up quickly to find his friend staring at a photograph that lay face upward upon a pile of clothing.

The Doctor's face grew tender and a little smile played about his lips. "That is she," he said softly.

"My God!" burst from Randal's white lips.

Gordon gazed at North—in astonishment at first; then, as the truth slowly dawned on him, he sank into a chair, his face white, his great frame trembling.

"She is the woman you are going to marry?" he whispered hoarsely.

Randal's silence seemed sufficient answer, and for awhile there was no sound in the room where two men wrestled, the one with anguish, the other with horror and perplexity. From where he sat Randal could see, above the tops of intervening houses, the colored lights of the roof-garden in the next block, and except when it was drowned by the nearer rumble of the elevated trains he could hear the music the orchestra was playing.

He endeavored to collect his thoughts, to consider what it was best to do. He felt that the succession of difficulties into which the ill-fated farce, his engagement, had plunged him had all been forerunners of the storm which had just now burst with startling suddenness above his defenceless head.

His friend's anguish cut him to the heart. It should not last a moment longer than was necessary, he determined. On his arrival at The Cedars he would petition Mrs. Williston to be allowed to tell the Doctor the truth about the engagement.

If she asked him why he wished to do this, he could not, of course, tell her that the Doctor loved her, but he would assure her that his reason was a good one, and when she learned the name of the man with whom he wished to share their secret he believed she would not hesitate about giving him the permission he desired. No one could know Doctor Gordon and not know also that a secret would be safe with him.

The Doctor lifted himself heavily from his chair and held out the photograph to Randal. "Take it," he said. "I have no right to keep it now."

"You have," said Randal, "if I am willing."

"No," returned the other man, speaking vehemently, "I will not keep it. I could not look at it without hating you, and I don't want to hate the best friend I have."

"Hate me!" cried Randal. "You must not do that. No woman must come between us. Why, I'd rather never marry than have our friendship spoiled. I—perhaps—it may be that I shall never marry Mrs. Williston anyway. I have sometimes thought that we are unsuited to one another," Randal faltered.

Doctor Gordon's look of suffering gave place to one of anger. "North," he cried incredulously, "listen! If Cynthia Williston has promised to marry you, it is because she loves you. Her happiness is in your hands and I shall hold you responsible for it. Do you hear?"

"Yes," replied Randal, with a sigh, "I hear."

The other man gazed at him narrowly. "You are acting very strangely, North," he said. "I dislike to accuse you of flippancy, but your attitude in the matter of your engagement certainly lacks seriousness. I should regret this in any case, but with the woman I love concerned it seems more than I can bear. And I may as well tell you the truth; I'm disappointed in you, Randal."

North turned with an impatient movement and walked to the window. What could he say? Was there no immediate way of vindicating himself and comforting his friend? At least, none presented itself to his tortured brain. "I'm in the enviable position of the man who tried to catch up with a lie," he thought. "Do all men have to learn by experience the futility of deceit? God grant me patience. I must go at once, or I shall break my word and tell him the whole story."

"You are going?" said the Doctor, seeing his visitor move towards the door.

"Yes," replied Randal. "Don't get up. I can let myself out." As North passed through the curtained doorway he saw Doctor Gordon lean back in his chair with the shuddering, relieved sigh of a man whose nerve has barely brought him through an ordeal.

In the hall Randal met the servant on his way to the office with a

tray. Obeying an impulse, Randal stopped him, and pouring a glass of wine drained it to the bottom.

"You may take these things back," he said to the man; "your master does not wish to be disturbed."

X.

"I INSISTED on coming alone to meet you," said Mrs. Williston. She and North were driving, in a high cart behind a frisky pair of ponies, along the road leading from the railway station to The Cedars.

Cynthia held the reins. She was wearing a tight-fitting gown of violet cloth, and even his worried state of mind did not prevent North from wondering how it was she contrived always to make a picture of herself.

"I wanted to avoid meeting you in public," she went on, turning to smile at her companion. "I don't find it as easy to act my part as I supposed it would be."

"Nor I," said Randal. Had his eyes not been upon the landscape he would have seen the tiny frown that appeared on the face of the lady beside him.

After a moment's pause he added, "I am going to ask a favor of you," and plunged at once into what he had to say.

Cynthia listened attentively.

"I am not going to grant your favor," she said when he had finished. "I think it would be most unwise. No secret is safe with three people. You tell your best friend—as you say this man is; he tells someone—presumably a woman, whose silence he is sure can be depended on; she in turn confides in someone equally trustworthy. We should be the laughing-stock of the country in no time. No, the best plan is for us to keep each other to our compact."

"I haven't told you my friend's name," replied Randal. "When you hear that I am quite sure you will be willing to alter your decision."

"Is it Mr. Bertram Jones?" queried Mrs. Williston, leaning forward to get her whip and then turning her head to look at North. "I forgot to tell you, he arrived yesterday. He is a charming fellow," she continued, "but not to be trusted with a secret, I am quite sure."

"No, I didn't mean Bert," Randal said. "My friend's name is Doctor Alexander Gordon."

Mrs. Williston brought her whip down upon the ponies' backs with a sharp flick that changed their slow trot to a fast one.

"There is no one I wouldn't rather have you tell," she declared, speaking her words incisively. "Doctor Gordon is the last man I want to know that story." A spot of red burned in each of her cheeks.

"He is to be trusted," said Randal in a puzzled way. "You could not even be slightly acquainted with him and not know that."

"Oh, yes, he could be trusted, of course," she replied, "but that is not the point. I will not have him know, and you promised to tell no one without my permission. An you are a man of honor you must keep your word," Mrs. Williston turned to add with a sudden gayety of manner and a brilliant smile.

Her anger, if anger it was, had died. During the rest of the drive she chatted volubly about trifles, changing the subject with laughing adroitness every time North tried to dissuade her from her decision.

At length they entered an avenue, and presently the carriage stopped before a house that was gay with awnings. A man in livery came forward and stood at the horses' heads.

"Welcome to The Cedars," cried Mrs. Williston as she gave her hand to North and sprang lightly to the ground. Randal bowed gravely but did not reply as, a perplexed and unhappy man, he followed his hostess up the steps to the shaded piazza, where he was presented to the men and women who sat about in chairs and on bamboo divans, laughing and talking and sipping iced drinks. Mrs. Williston was well provided with chaperons, North observed: she had three widowed aunts living with her.

The introductions over, Cynthia turned to the servant who stood at her elbow with a letter on his tray. She glanced through the missive.

"It's from Marian," she said, addressing the company in general. "The Reynolds want her to remain with them a few days longer, so she will not be home until Saturday.

"Well, I hope you'll all be fed and properly taken care of," continued Mrs. Williston plaintively. "Marian is my right-hand man and manages everything," this to North. "She is the business woman I ought to be. I never know until Marian goes away and the housekeeper comes to me for orders that the house does not run itself."

"She was to play golf with me on Friday," said a young man in knickerbockers and a red coat.

"And she promised to show me how to begin the Renaissance cap I'm going to make for my grandmother," cried the young lady sitting next him.

"She said she'd have a new story made for me, the best one she ever told," was the wail contributed by a young gentleman of five.

Mrs. Williston turned to North. "Marian is the only woman I ever envied," she said. "Do you wonder that I am jealous of her?"

"Are you jealous of her?" inquired North without really knowing what he said.

"Desperately," Cynthia replied. "I'll tell you what we'll do," she went on in a louder tone; "we'll get Mr. North to fulfil the engagements Marian has so heartlessly broken. I feel sure he'll be delighted

to play golf with you, Mr. Busby," she concluded with a mischievous glance at the young man addressed.

There was a general laugh at this, in which Mr. Busby joined.

"He can't teach me to make Renaissance lace," pouted the young lady.

"Perhaps not," said her hostess; "still, he might try. I've seen men attempt even more impossible things for the sake of the society of a charming young girl. On second thoughts, however, I shall not let him try," continued Mrs. Williston with a sudden remembrance of her own interest in the matter. "You are much too pretty, Gladys. But I'm sure he'll tell you a story, Dick, if you ask him nicely."

The boy ran to Cynthia and hung about her knees. "It won't be as nice as Marian's stories," he cried.

Mrs. Williston gently tweaked one of his curls. "Oh, yes, it will, Sir Loyalty," she answered, smiling into the grave little face uplifted to hers. "Mr. North knows any number of fine stories, and some of them he has made into books."

The child looked wonderingly at North, to whom the scene around him had the unreality of a dream. His friend's haggard face marred the beauty of his surroundings, his friend's cry of despair rang out above the laughter of the people about him and made their gayety seem a ghastly thing.

"If you will come with me, Mr. North," said the voice of his hostess, "I will show you the room I have set apart for your study while you are here."

North followed her mechanically. "You are very kind," he said after he had seen the cosy apartment she assured him was the quietest corner of the house.

When they were in the hall again Mrs. Williston summoned a servant and instructed the man to show Mr. North to his room.

Randal started up the polished stairway, but at the second step he turned and came back to where Cynthia stood.

"I am going to ask you once more to allow me to share our secret with Doctor Gordon," he said in a low tone. "Although I cannot tell you what it is, I have the best of reasons for wanting him to know."

Mrs. Williston frowned and tapped a foot impatiently on the floor. "And I have the best of reasons for not wanting him to know," she said clearly and concisely. "As you cannot tell your reason and I will not tell mine, it seems to me the fairest way to both of us is to let the matter rest as it is. This engagement, or whatever you choose to call it, will soon be a thing of the past, and then surely there will be no need to tell him, if any exist now. You will respect my wishes?" She spoke lightly, but there was an undertone of earnestness in her voice.

North bowed. "I have given you my word," he said gravely, and went on up the stairs.

XI.

NORTH's thoughts as he dressed for dinner were in a whirl of perplexity and despair. It seemed to him a pity, such a pity, that his friend Gordon must go on suffering merely because of a woman's senseless whim. For North believed that Cynthia's refusal to let him confide in the Doctor was due to nothing else than whim.

While he had come to realize that the pretence of an engagement was daily proving a more serious affair than either of them had anticipated, it was easy to see that Cynthia's view of the matter grew more and more at variance with his.

She regarded it as a delicious bit of comedy. She enjoyed using her wit to extricate herself from the difficult situations their ruse entailed, and she delighted in the knowledge that they were fooling people. The feeling that they were dealing lightly with things meant to be held sacred, a conviction that rendered Randal more and more uncomfortable as it grew stronger, Cynthia did not share at all.

For one thing North was grateful. This was that she did not expect him to play the role of a devoted lover. Apparently she was quite satisfied with the grave deference he showed her in the presence of others; when they were alone his manner was even graver and more deferential.

What caused him most disquietude, next to the thought of the Doctor's pain, was the knowledge that he had lowered himself in his friend's estimation. Not understanding his position, Gordon had misconstrued his attitude. He had been quick to see and resent the fact that North did not love Cynthia as he ought to love the woman he meant to marry, and when the news of the breaking of their supposed engagement reached him Randal feared that the Doctor would believe him instrumental in ending it. He doubted whether his friend could be made to see the matter in a different light unless Cynthia could be induced to consent to his knowing the whole story.

This Randal determined she should be made to do. For the present, since he could with honor neither break his word nor betray his friend's confidence, he felt that he must leave matters in the hands of fate.

He tried to put his anxiety from him as he descended to the hall, where Mrs. Williston's guests were gathered to await the announcement of dinner.

As he watched his hostess he found himself more than ever wondering that she should have inspired the love of a man like Gordon. He tried to imagine her the Doctor's wife, and failed utterly. At this moment Cynthia laughingly rallied him on his silence, and North, with a witty reply, turned to Miss Gladys Davis, whom he had brought in to dinner.

Bert Jones had escorted his hostess. North watched the pair with

a wish that Bert were in his place. "He would fit the part far better than I seem able to do," he mused, "and were he in my shoes I have an idea that the sham engagement might lead to a real one." This possibility brought his mind back to the Doctor. His reflections were interrupted as the women left the table. A few moments later the men joined them in the drawing-room.

This long, lofty apartment was French in its aspect, the prevailing colors being pale shades of pink and blue artistically blended, and the gilt mouldings and cornices delicate rather than ornate in design. Dainty sprays of pink roses on a blue satin ground formed the covering for the walls; bisque figures took the place of statues; upon each of the two mantels stood French clocks with nothing sonorous in their bell-like chime; electric lights shed a roseate glow through the petals of porcelain roses; on the high ceiling painted Cupids tossed painted roses; and on the many tables scattered about the room bowls of real roses bloomed amid innumerable costly knickknacks. Through the long, open windows came the air of the July night, warm and fragrant, and North could see the pillars of the piazza gleaming white in the moonlight, and beyond the tempting shadows of the garden.

"We must have music," Cynthia cried gayly. "There is enough talent here for a very good concert. Get your guitar, Gladys, and you your mandolin, Mr. Busby. Miss Stanhope and Mr. Randolph shall sing, and, Mr. Robinson, you will find a piano in the music-room just on the other side of that curtain. Will you begin the entertainment?"

The young man addressed went into the next room and played an inspiring air. He was followed by Mr. Busby with a popular tune upon the mandolin, and then Miss Gladys Davis played plaintive airs upon a guitar.

The blended sweetness and pathos of her playing charmed North, and feeling that he could enjoy it better away from the restless silence of the room, he stepped through one of the windows to the porch.

As he stood presently, leaning against a pillar and listening to a love-song, he thought of Doctor Gordon sitting in his study in the moonlight before the empty fireplace, alone with his love and his despair.

A burst of applause followed the song, and mingling with the clapping a silvery laugh and the hum of voices. These last had a note of importunity, varied by Mrs. Williston's replies in tones of protest, which by degrees grew fainter, and presently North heard her sing coon songs and one or two ballads, after which another woman's voice recited a poem and a sketch in darky dialect.

Randal had forgotten his anxiety for the moment and was thinking how well the scene would work into a novel, when a shadow fell across the pathway of light nearest him and, turning, he saw his hostess standing just inside the window.

In the soft glow of the moonlight, with the brilliance of the room behind her for a background, she looked a charming figure in her dinner-gown of white satin with diamonds in her red-gold hair, and as he gazed at her North thought he had never seen anything more exquisite than the creamy whiteness of her skin.

"I don't blame you for liking to be out here, it is so cool and pleasant," she said, smiling, "but you must come in now and contribute your part to the entertainment."

"I am afraid you will have to let me off," North replied as he followed her into the drawing-room. "I neither play nor sing."

"Your education has been sadly neglected," Cynthia said. "Here is a man who says he can neither play nor sing," she added in a louder tone. "How can he amuse us? Ah, I have it." She touched a bell in the wall. "He shall read us a chapter from his latest novel."

If there were one thing North disliked above all things else, it was to read aloud anything that he had written. He had sometimes dreamed of a woman to whom he could read from his books as he wrote them, one who would praise and criticise and suggest changes, but so far he had not found the woman.

To read aloud from the story that seemed a part of himself for the benefit of this laughing, chattering crowd— Still, he felt that it would be scarcely courteous to his hostess to refuse what she and her guests no doubt regarded as a trifling favor.

When a servant had brought the book Mrs. Williston turned its pages rapidly until she had found the place she sought, then handed the volume to Randal.

The company settled back in leisurely attitudes to listen. Randal grew angry as he read. Cynthia had selected the one chapter in the book which contained a proposal.

When the chapter was finished and he had closed the volume he raised his eyes to meet Mrs. Williston's gaze. Turning abruptly from the mischief in her eyes he said good-night and went to his room.

Randal's efforts to banish from his thoughts the matter that was troubling him resulted in its rushing back to his mind with renewed force as soon as he found himself alone. He spent the night staring with wide-open eyes into the darkness.

At last morning came. During the day in a renewed struggle to forget he played golf and tennis energetically. That night, with his state of mind exaggerated by loss of sleep and food—he could eat nothing,—Randal did not go to bed at all, but paced his room till daylight.

He went down to breakfast with a curious ringing in his ears. He found it an effort to listen to what was said to him and to make sensible replies, an effort that grew greater as the day advanced.

He was on his way to his room to dress for dinner when he met his hostess in the upper hall.

"I think I had better get back to the city," he said to her; "I fear I am going to be ill."

As he stopped speaking Randal, feeling a sudden faintness, sat down upon a divan that stood near the head of the stairs.

Mrs. Williston looked at him with kindly concern. "I am sorry," she was beginning, when a commotion in the lower hall attracted her attention, a clamor of voices raised in greeting.

Cynthia turned from him towards the stairs. "Thank Heaven, Marian has come!" North heard her say as he fell back unconscious.

XII.

DURING a long period of time that held neither nights nor days, only an unbroken stretch of monotony, North was aware of burning pillows replaced by cool ones, of soft hands upon his forehead, of horrible mixtures forced down his throat, and of a deathlike stillness broken at intervals by voices that sounded strange yet familiar and seemed to come from a great distance.

All these things he was cognizant of as one is conscious of the events in a dream; his first real sensation came when he opened his eyes and saw bending over him the most beautiful face he had ever seen.

Not with an outward beauty, merely,—with homely features this face would still have been lovely,—but a countenance inexpressibly fine because of the reflection of inner beauty that blended with its grace of contour and daintiness of coloring.

Randal smiled back into the calm, kind eyes, and was about to speak when the vision laid a finger on its lips, enjoining silence. North's lips closed again and with a sigh of content he drifted off to sleep,—not, however, before he had noted that the figure beside his bed wore a nurse's costume.

When he awoke it was another nurse who administered, but presently a door on his left opened and the young woman who had bent over him before he went to sleep came in.

"You are better?" she inquired.

"Oh, yes," said North; "well, I think."

She smiled at this, and going to the window lowered the shade a little so that no glare of light came into his eyes.

"How long have I been ill?" North asked. The other nurse had slipped out silently and they two were alone.

"You are not to ask questions yet," she said, smiling again.

"Mayn't I ask your name?"

"I am Miss Gray, one of your nurses."

"It is very good of you," North said. "I knew all that you did for me, though I could not speak to thank you."

"I do not like to be thanked," Miss Gray paused on her way to the door to tell him. She came back after awhile with a bowl of broth, which North drank eagerly.

Day followed day, and he neither remembered the past nor thought of the future: he was absorbed in the present, content to lie still and feel his strength come back to him, his eyes watching the movements of the woman who spent her days at his bedside.

She would not allow him to talk much, but he did not mind; it suited him as well to look at her in silence between lids she thought were closed.

It was the twilight hour he liked best, when Miss Gray was setting the room in order for the night nurse, and the place in the dim light with a fragrant breeze and the sounds of the summer night coming in at the open window made him feel as if he were in a church. There was something about Miss Gray that reminded him of organ music,—she soothed while she inspired.

But one day, a rainy, dreary day it was, when the view outside the window showed the drenched boughs of trees and a sullen sky, North's content gave place to restlessness. Bed had suddenly become intolerable.

"Am I cross?" he said to Miss Gray. "I don't mean to be a bear, but I feel as if I must fly into twenty thousand pieces. I'm sure I can't stay together very much longer. For the first time in my life I can realize what a nervous woman suffers."

Without replying, Miss Gray left the room. A moment later there came to North's ears the music of Schubert's "Serenade," played upon a violin. His tense nerves, his restlessness, left him, and he lay back, soothed into a calm and restful state of mind.

The music did not stop for some time. Soft adagios and quaint, old-fashioned melodies followed one another until Randal felt that he could have cried from pure joy in the sweetness of it. When Miss Gray came back he did not thank her.

"Where did you learn to play like that?" he asked.

"Everywhere," she answered. "My violin is my oldest and best friend."

"You put your love for it into your playing. Will you pardon me if I ask why you chose such a humble profession as nursing when you might be making a fortune on the concert stage?"

Miss Gray chose to make her answer both evasive and humorous. "As a concert performer I should be more or less the servant of the public; as a nurse I am 'monarch of all I survey,' the autocrat of the sick-room. My authority is second to that of none but the doctor."

North laughed with her. How many charming byways there were to her mind, he thought. She could be by turns grave or gay, serious or jesting, and yet maintain through all these phases the steadfast dignity that was her greatest charm.

Suddenly as she stood by the bedside in her simple nurse's dress, with a ray of the sunlight just breaking through the clouds upon her dark hair, a revelation came to North.

"Now I know who you are," he cried exultingly.

Miss Gray gave him a swift, keen glance. "Well, who may I be?" she asked gently.

"You are the princess in the fairy tale, she whom I have waited for since the world began, she whom I was put into the world to love. I always felt that I should know you at once. Please don't look at me like that. I'm not delirious and I'm not mad enough to ask anything of you now. I'll wait with patience while I try to win your love. It seems to me that you must love me in time, but even if you should never grow to care for me, I'd rather love you than any other woman."

Randal leaned back on his pillows, weak with the effort his speech had cost.

Miss Gray rose and stood looking down at him, her mouth scornful, her eyes kindled with an anger terrible to see. North was reminded of a storm among mountains.

"You are angry with me," he cried, "and no wonder! I was an impetuous fool to startle you so. Oh, try, try to forgive me."

While he spoke the anger died from Miss Gray's face and left her calm and quiet. North divined why her wrath had died so suddenly—she had remembered that he was ill. She could not vent anger upon a man just back from the gates of death. He felt a sickening sensation, a horrible dread of—he knew not what.

Hearing a rustle, he turned his head quickly and saw Cynthia Williston standing in the doorway.

XIII.

ALL the past came surging back to Randal during the interval in which Cynthia advanced to the bedside while Miss Gray left the room by another door.

"Now I wonder what ever made her fly away like that," said Mrs. Williston. "Oh, I forgot. I suppose she thought I wanted to see you alone," she added, looking down at North with mischievous eyes. "At first I used to find it embarrassing to have people so considerate, but now I'm quite amused."

Randal did not reply; he only stared at her dumbly.

"Didn't you find Marian a capital nurse?" Mrs. Williston inquired.

"Marian?" echoed North in a bewildered way.

"Yes, Marian Gray, my cousin. Didn't she tell you who she was? Well, that was like Marian. You ought to feel grateful to her, I can tell you. And you thought she was a paid nurse." Mrs. Williston broke into laughter in which Randal did not join. She had exchanged her straight chair for a rocker and sat with her hands clasped behind her head.

"You wouldn't have me about," she remarked plaintively. "You went into quite a paroxysm of temper every time I entered the room, so Doctor Gordon forbade my coming."

"Gordon!" cried North. "Was he here?"

Mrs. Williston leaned forward and mechanically arranged the bottles on Randal's table in a precise row. "We telegraphed for him the day you were taken ill," she answered. "He had a bed in the next room and did not leave you night or day until you were out of danger. He only went then because an important case in the city demanded his attention. What a very dictatorial person he is," she added.

"He is a man of power," returned North shortly.

At this moment the door opened and the "man of power" entered the room.

"Gordon!" cried North.

"My very substantial self." The Doctor looked at Randal keenly as they shook hands. "You are better," he remarked; "you must get up to-morrow."

"Doctor Gordon, do you know that you have not spoken to me yet?" put in Cynthia.

"I beg your pardon," the Doctor said as he took the hand she offered him. "How do you do, Mrs. Williston?"

"I will order a room prepared for you, the one you had before," Cynthia said presently, adding, "I know you will want to be near Mr. North."

Doctor Gordon put out a protesting hand. "I must return to the city to-night," he told his hostess.

"Oh, no. Mr. North, you must not allow him to go," she cried. "You do Mr. North so much good," she went on after a pause.

Randal, who remembered her cold anger the first time he had mentioned Gordon's name to her, was astonished at the pleading sweetness in her voice. His surprise was followed by a sharp stab of pain as he recollected all that had passed between his friend and him at their last meeting.

Evidently the Doctor divined North's thought, for he replied, "I'm not so sure of that."

"I am," retorted Cynthia with what was for her an unwonted gravity. "He tells me you are the best friend he has in the world."

The Doctor smiled. "He told you that before his engagement, I

am sure," he said with old-fashioned gallantry. "However, I trust he will never have cause to doubt my loyalty to him." There was a serious note under the lightness of the Doctor's tone.

Mrs. Williston turned to leave them. "I am going to depend upon Mr. North to persuade you to stay," she said to the Doctor.

When he had closed the door after her Gordon took a chair by the bedside.

"How I hate myself for all I have made you suffer," North said abruptly.

Again that keen look that Randal did not understand.

"Perhaps you have exaggerated my suffering," the Doctor said slowly.

Randal raised himself to stare at the speaker. "What do you mean?—that you do not care any more?" he cried incredulously.

"The steady determination to endure sometimes results in release," was the Doctor's unexpected reply. "No, I do not care—now."

Randal fell back on his pillows. "Ah, I am so glad," he murmured; "I shall get well fast now."

"That is what I want you to do," said the other man.

"She was not worthy of you, anyway," North came near saying, but remembered and checked himself in time. "It seems too good to be true," he remarked instead. He did not voice his surprise that the man he could have sworn was constancy itself should have changed in so short a time.

The Doctor smiled down at him. "What shall I do to make you believe that it is true?" he asked.

"Stay until I am well enough to go to the city with you," cried Randal; "that is, if you are sure it will not hurt you."

Doctor Gordon looked out of the window into the still summer twilight. When he replied to Randal's speech his words seemed to come from a distance and a height, as if his soul and not his voice had spoken them.

"I will stay," he said.

XIV.

AFTER the Doctor had gone to dress for dinner Randal lay with closed eyes, thinking over the events of the afternoon. Would Marian believe that he had not remembered Mrs. Williston and her claim upon him? And even if she did believe this, would she ever forgive him for what he now saw was a piece of unpardonable folly?

But for his mad confession he might have had her for a friend until such time as he was free to win her love, but he knew that she would never consent to be friends with a man whom she supposed to be engaged to another woman when that man had confessed that he loved her.

North felt that things were going very much against him. His one consolation lay in the hope that Cynthia would release him soon.

On the following morning he rose and dressed, and the Doctor helped him to walk to a dainty room on the other side of the hall.

When he was comfortably settled in an easy-chair and the Doctor had gone away Randal let his gaze wander round the room and then out of the window.

The carefully blended tints of pale green which made the place within seem like a dream of springtime contrasted oddly with the dusty, darker aspect of the world outside. The year, past the beauty of maturity, had not yet come to autumn loveliness.

North turned, although he had heard no sound, and found Miss Gray standing beside him. He did not know how long she had been there, but evidently she too had been looking out of the window, for she said softly, "Poor, tired Mother Nature."

Randal did not reply. Despite the fact that he had spent many hours since he had last seen her in conjecture as to what he could say to her at their next meeting, how frame his appeal for pardon, he was no better off for all his thinking. He could only sit still and stare dumbly at the carpet.

Marian did not allow the silence to become awkward. "You are looking better," she said; "your journey across the hall has done you good."

North dared not lift his eyes, so full were they of reverent admiration. What other woman would have come to him like this and, instead of leaving him to blunder out of his predicament as best he could, taken the situation in her hands and disposed of it in her own delicate, womanly way?

North knew now that he need not speak of what had occurred unless he wished, but he knew too that if the matter were not disposed of in some way Marian, though she might be always kind and even friendly to him, would nevertheless set up a barrier between them, one that would be invisible to others, perhaps, but none the less impassable to him.

"Miss Gray," he said, "will you forgive me? There is, there can be, no excuse for me, I know, and I deserve a flogging rather than forgiveness, but——"

"Mr. North," Marian gently interrupted, "you are making too much of a very trifling matter. That is the way with invalids," she went on in a lighter tone, "they magnify every trifle into a mountain of trouble. I know that you were not yourself yesterday, and the music upset you; you weren't strong enough to bear it. Then too a person who is ill always exaggerates the importance of the nurse who can minister to him skilfully. He wants at his bedside not the woman

he loves, but the one who can care for him best. But as soon as he recovers—mark the fickleness of man—his worship of his particular Florence Nightingale tones down to a gratitude which is far more welcome and less embarrassing to her.”

“Then you forgive me?” queried North, almost too joyfully.

“No, I have nothing to forgive, only something to forget.”

“Then we are friends once more?”

“Of course.” A faint note of surprise in her voice warned North.

“You will play to me again?” he could not refrain from asking.

“Perhaps, when you are stronger.”

She went away, leaving North puzzled. Did she think that he had been delirious on the previous afternoon, he asked himself over and over again. Finally, feeling that all attempts to find the answer to this question must be useless, he gave himself up to the pleasanter thought that they were friends. After all, he had much to be thankful for.

Randal’s next visitor was Doctor Gordon, who, however, left the room again when Cynthia came in a few moments later.

“How do you like my bower?” she queried, nodding to Randal.

“One needs to look out of the window to remember that it is not spring,” he told her.

Cynthia laughed in a pleased fashion. “I sometimes wish that spring could come after summer instead of before it,” she said. “If the seasons were really persons, as they are represented in allegory, they surely would protest against always marching in the same order.”

Randal laughed with her. “In here, at least, it is always spring,” he replied. “But tell me, why is the house so quiet? Where are your guests?”

“‘They’ve all gone away,’” sang Mrs. Williston. “The Doctor sent them; he said you must have quiet.”

“You played the part of the good Samaritan in keeping me here and caring for me,” North said gratefully. “I have no mother and no home, but you should have sent me to a hospital.”

“Why, when we had a trained nurse in the house?” retorted Cynthia. “Marian got her diploma a short time before I persuaded her to come to live with me.”

“It must have been dull for you here,” observed North. “Why didn’t you go away too?”

“And leave you?” cried she laughingly. “Would you have me counted utterly heartless? How often you forget that we are supposed to be engaged. Well, I can’t blame you, for it would be hard always to remember a real engagement, I fancy. Think of the effort it must have been for me to act my part when you were very ill. ‘How can you

be so calm when the man you have promised to marry is at death's door?" Marian said to me once. Don't you like Marian?"

"Very much," replied North, but he added nothing more. His gratitude for Marian's goodness to him was something of which he could speak to no one but her.

XV.

It was several weeks later. The house was once more filled with guests, and on this night Mrs. Williston was giving a dance.

So far she had not set North free, but then, he thought, she could scarcely be expected to do so before he was entirely well.

Of course, the world must be made to think that the breaking of their supposed engagement was in accordance with her wish, not his, and what would the world think of a woman who could throw over a man not yet recovered from a critical illness?

During this reverie the young man had been wandering about from room to room on the lower floor. It was just after dinner. Most of Mrs. Williston's visitors had arrived only that afternoon, and Randal was feeling rather wearied and bewildered from the excitement of seeing so many people after his long seclusion.

All day the place had been given over to florists and electricians, but now, the workmen being gone and the guests in their rooms, the house was enjoying a temporary quiet.

Randal sat down upon a divan under the stairway, and it was there that Marian found him as she was passing through the hall on her way to a last consultation with the butler.

As she paused and looked at him with kindly concern Randal gazed back at her wonderingly. He had never seen her wearing anything but a nurse's uniform or the plainest of gowns; now, in her ball dress of blue with a touch of the same color in her dark hair, she looked—he could find no word to describe her.

He had been accustomed to think of her as a woman who because of her reserve and a certain gravity of manner would be passed by for women of lesser, more conspicuous charms; now he realized that the woman before him was one whom many men would love and strive to win.

"I am afraid the noise and confusion are proving too much for you," Marian said, smiling.

"Yes, a little," Randal confessed. "A quiet moment would put me all right again, but a couple of fellows who came down by the afternoon train are dressing in my room."

"Would you like to rest awhile in my sitting-room?" Marian asked. "Cynthia's sanctum has been invaded by a bevy of girls."

Just inside the doorway of the room into which Marian conducted him North paused involuntarily and looked about. The place in its

simplicity was in odd contrast to the atmosphere of luxury prevailing in the rest of the house.

There were several easy-chairs, a divan made inviting by a collection of pillows not too dainty to be used, numerous pictures evidently chosen with more reference to the owner's taste than their fitness to hang upon the same walls, long, low cases filled with books, a desk and a centre-table on which were more books, a riding-whip and a vase filled with wild flowers. By itself upon a smaller table was Marian's violin case.

The room was lighted only by a hanging lamp which shed a circle of light upon the centre-table, leaving the corners of the room in shadow.

"Take that chair by the window," commanded Marian; "you will find it comfortable. And you are to stay here until you feel equal to coming downstairs."

She left the room with a backward glance and a smile.

North seated himself and tried to analyze the spell of repose the room had cast upon him. Its chief charm lay in a sort of orderly disorder which suggested comfort but not carelessness.

He was glad he had found the one woman in the world for him, North told himself; glad too that he could love her unreservedly. He had dreaded lest he might bestow the love of his life, all the devotion of which he was capable, upon one whom he would have to love against his better judgment.

He had known men who had gone to ruin for women not worthy of honest love. North knew that he would never do that, but he had feared lest when he found her his idol should have "feet of clay."

He looked out of the window to the garden, where among the trees electric lights gleamed in colored globes, and beyond along the drive rows of gleaming white lights wound from lodge to house, then lifted his eyes to where the stars shone. The lights were lesser women, the stars were Marian.

He thought of Cynthia. She and Marian were as different as one of the world's incomparable marbles is unlike a Dresden china figure.

At this moment an overwhelming force took possession of North, shame that he had doubted the ways of the Providence that was leading him to the greatest blessing of his life.

Blind fool that he had been, to fret over the tangle! He who had watched so many of the misfortunes of others turn out to be for the best should have had more faith.

It was his creed—one he always strove to bring out in his novels—belief that all things work together for good, and yet at the first test in his own experience he had cut a pitiable figure with his blind railings at fate.

Now he saw the matter in the right light. The privilege to try to win Marian must soon be his. Surely Cynthia would not carry the farce (North had dropped the comedy) on much longer. Perhaps this very night she would set him free, he told himself hopefully.

With his thoughts moving with tranquillity, like music that is neither grave nor gay, Randal fell to planning the future, and it was not until an orchestra began to play on the floor below that he rose and went out to the noise and gayety of the evening's entertainment.

XVI.

IN the lower hall Randal met Marian a second time. "Will you give me a dance—a waltz?" he asked as he gained her side.

"Yes," she said, smiling.

"The first one?"

Marian looked at him in surprise. "The first dance belongs to Cynthia," she answered.

North's face flushed as he murmured: "Of course. How stupid of me not to remember. That's the worst of being ill. May I have the second waltz, then?"

Marian inclined her head as the opening bars of the first dance fell on their ears. A moment later she moved away with Doctor Gordon, who came to claim her.

Randal took himself off to the ballroom, where he found Mrs. Williston, for the first time since he had known her, in what was distinctly an ill-temper.

"I thought you had forgotten my existence," she said almost crossly.

A little later in the evening Mrs. Williston and Doctor Gordon, having finished a dance, sought the coolness of the garden.

"How pretty it is here," the man said as they seated themselves near one of the fountains.

"Yes, I am fond of The Cedars," Cynthia replied. "I hope that my dance will be a success," she went on somewhat irrelevantly. "Are you enjoying it?"

"Yes." The abruptness of the Doctor's tone caused Cynthia to look up quickly. "I am enjoying it all the more, I suppose," the Doctor continued, "because when I am in the city there is little in my life except hard work."

"You are not to think of the city now nor for a good while," retorted Cynthia, with a smile.

"I must go back to it to-morrow morning," said the Doctor briefly.

"Oh, no, you must not," cried Cynthia, adding, "Mr. North is

far from well yet, and surely he is to be considered before your other patients."

"Randal is quite well enough to be left to your care and Miss Gray's," Dr. Gordon returned. "Do not urge me, Mrs. Williston. You mean to be kind, I am sure, but you must believe me when I tell you that it is best for me to go."

Cynthia did not reply for some moments. "It will please me very much if you will stay," she said finally. She had risen from her seat and stood with the moonlight shining full on her bare arms and her gown of white satin.

Doctor Gordon rose also and moved a little distance away from her.

"I cannot stay," he said.

Mrs. Williston's face underwent a change like the clouding of a summer sky before a storm. "I hate people who are stubborn," she cried with the petulance of a spoiled child, and, turning, walked rapidly towards the house.

Randal, who was coming along the path from the opposite direction and saw her leave the Doctor, stood still a moment to watch the latter's face as he gazed after the white figure disappearing down the moonlit path. When Cynthia was lost to sight Randal advanced and laid a hand on his friend's arm.

"Gordon," he said quietly, "you lied to me."

The other man turned a haggard face to him. "Yes," he answered in a dull tone, "I lied to you."

"Why did you do it?"

"Because if I had not you would have worried yourself into a relapse, from which you could never have recovered. You should have seen your face light up when I told my lie. I knew that so long as you were ill, at least, you would be easy to deceive, and I never meant you to learn the truth if I could help it. God knows I do not want to poison your happiness."

"It was like you," North said in the same quiet tone. "Did ever another man have such a friend, I wonder?"

Doctor Gordon put out a protesting hand. "Don't praise me," he exclaimed. "It was not for you alone that I did it: indeed, there were moments when it was only for her sake that I wanted you to live. But I owe you an apology, North, for my hasty words on the night of my arrival from Europe. My suspicions were unjust. I know you to be a man as little likely to wear your heart upon your sleeve as to marry a woman you do not love."

Randal sighed heavily but made no response. There seemed to be nothing to say. As if by common consent, the two men turned at the same moment and walked back to the house in silence.

Inside the house the music and laughter seemed to mock at North's melancholy mood, and it was not long before he sought the garden

again, where the strains of the orchestra sounded only faintly, like dream music.

He had been sitting for some time upon a bench in a secluded spot when the stillness was broken by a man's voice.

"I hardly think he can be very much in love with her," the speaker said.

"Or she with him," responded another voice.

"I'm not so sure of that. He doesn't give her much chance to show it if she is. A woman can't very well run after a man, even when she's engaged to him."

The second man laughed lazily. "They may be desperately in love with each other for all we know. It's hard to tell about such things; hearts are not worn upon sleeves at present."

"Nonsense," said the other impatiently. "I tell you, he doesn't care two pins about her. I'm disappointed in him. I wouldn't have set him down as a man who would marry for money, especially as he has plenty already."

"I don't believe he is marrying for money," declared the second speaker. "I am convinced that he cares more for her than we think. You know authors are a queer lot."

"Pshaw. A man's a man, even if he does write books, and if North were in love with her, he'd be jealous of Bert Jones. Not that I blame her: a flirtation with another man is a neglected woman's only shield. If I were in her place, I wouldn't stand North's indifference; I'd throw him over."

"Well, she must care for him or she would."

The two men moved on out of earshot, and as North looked after their retreating figures he saw Mrs. Williston standing a little distance away from him, her white, angry face lifted to the moonlight with a tear glistening on each cheek.

Randal realized that she too must have heard the conversation between the two men and a feeling of pity for her swept over him. He moved away silently, fearful lest she should see him.

Ever since the beginning of his engagement Randal, in his relations with Cynthia, had refrained carefully from taking the attitude of a lover.

He had done this for two reasons. In the first place, he did not love her and knew that he never could; secondly, he considered that it would be alike dishonorable to carry the deceit farther than was necessary for the success of their plan, or to take advantage of his position to pay her attentions which she could not well escape, but which might, nevertheless, be unwelcome to her.

He had thought Doctor Gordon's anger at his lack of enthusiasm natural enough, but it had not occurred to North that other people

might notice his indifference and comment upon it. He blamed himself severely for his short-sightedness.

There was but one thing to do, he reflected, as he walked back to the house. During the rest of the time their engagement lasted he must rescue Cynthia from her present position by devoting himself to her.

He realized that to do this would not be easy, and his soul rebelled at the task. To act the part of lover to one woman with his heart filled with new, sweet love for another—North squared his shoulders and braced himself against the feeling of revolt that came over him.

Had Cynthia cared for him and his engagement been a real one the deception might have been something noble and heroic, something worth while, but to go on adding to a farce—it was hideous bathos. North could have laughed aloud at the absurdity of it.

XVII.

WHEN North sought Marian to claim his waltz he found her in the conservatory with a smooth-faced youth who was evidently suffering the pleasurable agony of his first dance.

"You are always doing kind things," Randal said as the boy gave up his place reluctantly.

Marian smiled. "I remember my first ball," she replied, "and my horrible dread lest I should be a wall-flower."

"Will you come out to the garden?" North asked after they had danced.

Marian did not reply, but moved by his side into the cool night.

"What else did I say when I was out of my head besides abusing Mrs.—Cynthia?" Randal asked presently in an abrupt way.

"You begged me not to allow you to tell something you seemed very much afraid would slip out in spite of you. 'Don't let me tell,' you cried; 'help me to keep my secret.'"

"And did I tell?"

"I think not. You talked a great deal of nonsense, of course, but nothing that could be construed into a secret."

Randal sighed. "How I wish I could tell you the whole story," he said; "perhaps you could help me. My poor brain aches from thinking of it all and trying to puzzle out a way to mend matters. I hold two secrets, Miss Gray, which if both were told, might make two people happy, but I am bound to silence. I can do nothing—nothing."

Marian rested a hand on the back of the bench by which she was standing. "Then why not have patience and leave the matter in higher hands, Mr. North?" she said gently. "Life is full of tangles, I know, but when we try to straighten them out ourselves we usually make matters worse:

“ ‘Whate’er we leave to God, God does
And blesses us;
The work we choose should be our own
He lets alone.’ ”

“How good you are,” breathed North. “With such a creed life must be a simple and easy matter.”

She shook her head, and he fancied that the memory of many struggles lurked in her voice as she replied: “The simplest religion is hardest to live up to, I think. But it is not often one’s duty to worry. If you have no wrong to right——”

“I have done wrong, though unwittingly; but to right that wrong seems out of my power. I tried to play marbles with precious stones, and I have found my punishment in bringing sorrow to the best friend I have in the world. And yet I took what I thought and still think was the only honorable course. But, thank God! my friend’s pain is only temporary; things must come right in time. The key to the situation is not lost, it is only——” Randal stopped. “In the hands of an irresponsible woman,” was what he had come near saying.

For a time neither spoke. In their ears was the splash of a fountain and the rumble of carriages rolling down the drive. The music inside the house had ceased, and Mrs. Williston’s guests were taking their departure.

Presently, still without speaking, North and Marian rose and moved towards the house.

As they went up the steps of the porch they saw a pretty picture through the open dining-room windows. A merry party of people who were staying in the house had gathered round one of the supper-tables. North and his companion, pausing a moment, heard toasts given, followed by laughter and the sound of clinking glass.

The two on the porch were about to go on into the room when they saw Doctor Gordon rise to his feet. The talk and laughter instantly ceased.

The Doctor lifted his glass and looked round the room until his glance rested on Mrs. Williston. “To the happiness of our hostess and my friend, Mr. North,” he said. A cheer went up from the table as glasses were drained.

With an abrupt movement North caught Marian’s hand and lifted it to his lips, then stepped through the open window to Cynthia’s side and gravely responded to the toast.

XVIII.

It was half an hour later. The lights among the trees and along the drive were out and the garden was in darkness. The black clouds which a short while before had obscured the moon were fulfilling their promise of wind and rain.

Giant trees, bending to the gust, made a noise like the roaring of the sea, and long, slanting drops dashed against the windows, which the servants hurried about to close. There was thunder too, and now and then a vivid flash of lightning.

Most of Mrs. Williston's guests had gone to their rooms, but a few who were nervous still lingered below stairs.

Randal was about to make his way up to the apartment he and the Doctor were to share when, just inside a door at the rear of the hall, which ran through the centre of the house, he saw Marian talking with a man in workman's clothes. He had evidently just come in, for his garments were dripping.

"I don't like to ask you to go out such a wild night, Miss, but the Doctor says she won't live till morning. He can't do more for her, so he's gone away. She begged so hard to see you, I couldn't say 'no'—that I wouldn't ask you to come."

North, who was behind Marian, stood still and waited to hear more.

"You were right, James," she said. "I will go as soon as I have changed my gown. Go to the stable and tell Martin to saddle my horse. You know him, do you not?"

"Yes, Miss, many's the glass we've had together." The man turned and went out, letting in a gust of wind and a flash of lightning.

As the door closed behind him Marian turned to find herself facing North.

"You are not going out to-night." Randal spoke roughly.

"A little rain will not hurt me," said Marian, smiling, "and it is only five miles to Loch Mandrake."

"Loch Mandrake!" echoed North wildly. "Gordon told me only the other day what a dangerous ride it is. He says the road is set half way up a mountain, and that a misstep on the part of a horse would plunge animal and rider into a chasm."

"There is little danger for one who knows the road as I do, and my horse is sure-footed," returned Marian. "Don't keep me talking or I may be too late," she added, as North still stood before her, barring her progress.

"You shall not go," he cried; then, realizing the uselessness of setting his will against hers to hold her from what it was plain she considered a duty, he added, "At least, wait till morning."

Marian's voice took on a tone of impatience. "Morning may be too late," she said. "As it is, we are wasting precious time."

North stood aside and let her pass. As she started up the stairs he called to a servant who was passing through the hall, "Send at once to the stables and tell them to saddle a mount for me and send it to the door with Miss Gray's horse."

The man hurried away and Marian came back to North. "Do you

for a moment think I will let you go with me?" she cried. "I am well and strong; a wetting will not hurt me, but you—it might be your death." North hurried up the stairs ahead of her. "I'll be ready as soon as you are," was all he said.

In his room he hastily began changing his evening clothes for a riding-suit. His toilet was half completed when Doctor Gordon opened the door. He paused on the threshold to stare at Randal.

"Whatever in the world are you putting on those clothes for at this hour?" he demanded. "I expected to find you asleep."

North briefly outlined the situation. Before he had finished the Doctor had his own coat off.

"In your condition it would be madness for you to insist on going, Randal," he said. "Your life belongs to another; you have no right to risk it. I will go with Miss Gray."

North considered this plan in silence before he responded: "I believe you are right. I'm none too strong yet, and I might be more of a hinderance than a help. Will you go, and bring her back to me safely?"

The Doctor paused in his dressing to stare at Randal. "It's not Cynthia who is going?" he cried. "You told me Miss Gray——"

North's glance fell. "It is Miss Gray who is going," he replied, "but I felt none the less that it was my duty to go with her. She is very near and dear to Mrs.—Cynthia."

"Oh, of course. I didn't understand for the moment, but now I see your position in the matter." Doctor Gordon was slipping a small black case into his pocket.

North, who had been getting into his evening clothes again, followed the other man down to the hall, where they were soon joined by Marian. She looked surprised at seeing Gordon instead of North dressed for riding.

"I am going to accompany you if you will allow me," the former said.

"Oh, yes, it will be much better for you to go," she replied at once. "Mr. North is not strong yet, and——"

"It was madness for him to think of going," interrupted Gordon.

The outside door opened and the sick woman's husband put his head in to say that the horses were ready. Doctor Gordon went out, calling over his shoulder that he would be back in a moment.

North crossed the hall to Marian's side.

"Do you think Gordon will take better care of you than I?" he demanded, "or was it anxiety for me that made you look so glad when you found he was to go in my place?"

For a moment Marian's eyes gazed back at North with the look of a hurt animal in their depths; then she turned away from him and

her expression changed to one of cold anger. "You have no right to ask me such a question," she said. "Do not make me despise you, Mr. North."

North was prevented a reply by the entrance of Gordon.

"I wanted to have a look at the horses," the latter said. "Sleepy grooms can't always be depended on. Shall we start, Miss Gray?"

The Doctor held open the door. Marian, without a word to North, went out into the night and Gordon followed.

XIX.

NORTH stared at the closed door a moment before he turned to see Cynthia looking down at him from half-way up the stairs. How long she had been there and what she had heard he could not guess.

She came down the stairs to where he stood. "Where have they gone?" she demanded.

North told her.

"Loch Mandrake! On such a night!" Her voice was almost a scream. "Why wasn't I told?"

"Miss Gray wished you to know nothing about it. She feared you would stay awake and worry."

"Oh, she did!" Mrs. Williston's tone might have meant any one of a good many different things.

"Why didn't you go?" she asked.

"I wanted to, but Gordon wouldn't let me," Randal replied.

"Oh! And, of course, he had his way; he always does." Cynthia spoke jerkily as she moved over to a divan and seated herself upon it.

North followed and, sitting down beside her, tried to induce her to go to her room, but this she would not do. "I'm going to stay here until they come back," she said sullenly.

After this they talked little. North persuaded Cynthia to exchange the divan for an easy-chair and went himself to the other end of the hall, where he sat down before the ashes of the wood-fire.

He remembered how the same fire had danced and crackled early in the evening, lending an added beauty to the gay splendor of the scene.

Between the intervals of praying for Marian's safety he thought of many things.

His past and its mistakes moved in slow procession before his mind. North had done nothing of which he had reason to be ashamed, but he felt that his life must have been a more useful one and his work struck a deeper, truer note had he met Marian Gray when he was younger.

Mrs. Williston's voice broke in upon his thoughts. "Do you think they are there yet?"

"I cannot tell," North replied gently. "I don't know how long the journey ought to take. I have not been there, you know."

Silence reigned again. Presently Randal walked to the nearest window and, lifting the curtain, looked out into the night. Wind and rain together crooned a moaning song to the accompaniment of the rumble of thunder.

North fell to wishing he were with Marian—just they two together, riding on and on with the wind and the rain in their faces.

A sudden sound made him turn quickly. Cynthia's face was buried in her hands and she was sobbing. Randal tried to quiet her as he would have soothed a tired child. "You are worn out," he said. "Go upstairs and lie down, and as soon as they come I will send you word."

Cynthia only shook her head in reply, and it was an hour before her sobs ceased. When she had finally stopped crying she followed North to the window, where he stationed himself.

In the garden the night before the moon's rays had lent a faint green tinge to her satin gown; now in the first streaks of gray light it had a faded look, like a withered rose or the pages of an old book, but even the ghastly light could not dim the beauty of her creamy skin and wonderful, red-gold hair.

Regardless of Randal's expostulations she opened the window. The rain had stopped awhile before, the air was clear and cool, and the hush that precedes a new day was over all the world.

"It is 'the hour before the dawning,'" North observed when he had brought a wrap from the hatrack and put it around her.

"The time when happy people are asleep," she replied.

North felt a rush of pity for her. He knew now that in spite of her vivacity and gay manner, her beauty and her wealth, Mrs. Williston was not a happy woman.

Cynthia turned her head in the direction of the drive. "Hark!" she whispered.

It was horses' hoofs they heard, and a few moments later the Doctor and Marian dismounted and came into the hall.

"Thank God, you are safe!" burst from North's lips.

"Yes, we are safe," Marian said.

There was in her face a look of happiness, of exaltation, that had not been there when she went away. North divined at once that she had been through some new, uplifting experience.

"Was the woman glad to see you and did she die peacefully?" Cynthia inquired.

"She did not die at all," Marian cried. "Doctor Gordon brought her through the night and he says that now she will live. Think what a blessing for her husband and those five little children." She turned

to the Doctor. "How happy you must be," she exclaimed. "You have saved a life. To how few of us is given such a privilege."

Gordon shook his head. "It is by the grace of God that lives are saved," he declared.

He had scarcely stopped speaking when Randal darted forward just in time to save Marian from falling by catching her in his arms as she fainted.

"Poor little girl," said the Doctor. "The strain she has been under would wear anyone out. Let me carry her upstairs, North."

"No," protested Randal, "you are worn out too. I will carry her myself." He tried to speak calmly, but he felt ready to fight with the fierceness of a tiger had anyone tried to take her from him.

When he had laid Marian on a sofa in her sitting-room he left her in Gordon's care and turned to go downstairs.

He met Cynthia in the hall. "So you love her too, do you?" she said.

"Yes, I love her," North replied gently.

The next instant Cynthia had vanished into Marian's room and the door had closed behind her.

XX.

WHEN North awoke late next day the sun was shining through air washed to a sparkling clearness by the previous night's rain. He rose and dressed in a peaceful, contented frame of mind, such as he had not known for months, for at last he had found a way out of his difficulty. He had fretted and fumed because he could tell neither Marian nor Gordon about the strange compact into which he and Cynthia had entered, and he had grown sharply impatient at her delay in releasing him from that compact.

There would be no further delay, he was sure. Why had he not thought before to tell Cynthia that he loved Marian? From time immemorial the simplest way had always been the best way. He reflected that Mrs. Williston might wait a few days before broaching the subject, and during this interval he determined that he would act the part of her attentive if not devoted lover. He considered that he owed it to her to correct the impression that she was neglected.

He went downstairs to find the others at an afternoon breakfast discussing the dance of the night before and the storm that had followed.

Randal settled himself beside his hostess. If she felt any surly at the assiduity with which he devoted himself to her, she did not it, but fell in with his plan with her usual adaptability. Her mien had lost the petulance he had noticed of late, and she was very quite like the old Mrs. Williston that he had known in Lisle. Mary was not in the room, nor did Randal catch a glimpse of her until the afternoon, when he saw her ride away with Dr. Gordon in the direction of Loch Mandrake.

This time the Doctor came back alone "Miss Gray is going to stay a few days with the sick woman, who will need careful nursing if we are to pull her through," the Doctor said to North, who went out to the porch to meet him. "Miss Gray is a fine woman in every sense of the word," Gordon continued. "The world is full of lovely women and charming women, North, but it has none too many fine ones."

Yes, that was what Marian was, a fine woman, North reflected as he went into the music-room to turn music for Cynthia, who was singing, and Gordon was a fine man. What an ideal couple they would have made. As it was, the Doctor could not well fall in love with her, since he had given his heart to another woman, but might not Marian grow to care for him?

While the sick woman recovered they would be thrown much together, for Gordon had said that he meant to ride to the cottage twice a day. Randal hated himself for the sudden feeling of resentment against his friend that surged into his heart.

The days grew to weeks and the weeks lengthened to a month, and still Cynthia had not set North free. Meanwhile, as Mrs. Williston's guests departed, one by one, others came to take their places, so the house was always filled with pleasant people, who, unaware of the drama that was being acted before their eyes, gave themselves up to the task of getting the greatest possible amount of enjoyment out of the hours as they went by.

During the day they played golf and tennis and rowed upon the lake; in the evenings they danced, in the hall and on the lawn as well as in the ballroom. They acted plays and gave a performance of "Mrs. Jarley's Wax Works" for the benefit of the village library.

North and Gordon, who had both taken rooms at the village hotel, spent much time at The Cedars. Doctor Gordon had postponed his return to the city until the patient at Loch Mandrake was out of danger. It was characteristic of him, this leaving a rich practice in the hands of a brother physician in order to attend a case for which he intended to refuse payment.

Randal remained to be with the Doctor and to await the development of events.

The devotion to Mrs. Williston, in which he tried to be assiduous, was treated by that lady with unexpected favor. While North had appeared indifferent, she had been indifferent too, though always good-natured; now that he was attentive, his attentions were well received and apparently even desired.

Judging by appearance, Mrs. Williston regarded it as the most natural thing in the world that North should run her errands, turn music for her, and be her escort on all expeditions and her partner in all games. Indeed, she made opportunities to keep him at her side.

Meanwhile North lost no indication of the friendship that was slowly but surely growing up between Marian and the Doctor. To Randal Marian was kind always, even cordial, but he could not persuade himself that they were friends.

"She believes I tried to make love to her while I was engaged to another woman," he had the pleasure of reflecting. "How she must despise me."

His sole moments of anything approaching happiness during this time were when he was working on his book. Although he was not staying in the house, he still used the room that had grown to be called Mr. North's study. It was his habit to spend a few hours there every day, generally during the early evening.

He had learned that this time was Marian's practice hour, and there were few evenings on which he did not hear her violin in the music-room across the hall.

At the first note Randal would set his door ajar, turn down the lights, and give himself up to the music. It was in this way that he learned to know the depth and richness of Marian's nature, for she seemed to speak through her playing.

Sitting alone in the dim room with the firelight chasing the shadows Randal spent hours that were to live always in his memory. It was then that he seemed to get near to Marian. He liked to fancy that she was playing to him, telling him by her wonderful power over string and bow the things no words can be made to say.

XXI.

ONCE more Doctor Gordon had set a time for his return to the city, and once more he was persuaded to defer his departure. First he had agreed to remain in compliance with North's wish; then the patient at Loch Mandrake had been the means of keeping him; this time it was Mrs. Williston, who induced him to stay for the first day's hunting.

It was a bright, clear morning on which all the horses in the stable were saddled and brought to the front door, and it was a merry crowd that was gathered on the broad veranda, all with the exception of Marian in riding-dress.

"Are you not going with us?" North asked when he chanced to be by her side.

"No," she answered, "I never hunt."

North looked surprised. "I should have said you were fond of it—the ride across country in the keen air and the excitement of the chase."

"I do love a gallop over the fields, and often take one in the early morning," Marian replied, "but I cannot enjoy killing things."

At this moment Cynthia came across the lawn from the greenhouses and beckoned to her cousin, who went down the porch steps to meet her.

Randal watched them as they talked. They were too near, he thought, to the horses, who were packed close on the driveway before the house. He saw that Mrs. Williston's whip, as she flicked it, sometimes touched the animal nearest her, and that the horse seemed to resent this, showing his nervousness by fidgeting and pawing the ground.

As he looked North's terrified eyes saw the animal rear, his raised forefeet perilously near to the two women. As he dashed down the porch steps an agonized cry burst from his lips.

"Marian! Marian!" was the word that fell upon the still, sunlit air.

Quick as Randal had been, someone was before him. A burly form thrust itself between the prancing forefeet and the women, and Doctor Gordon's voice spoke quietly yet commandingly to the terrified horse.

North rushed in among the group, speaking soothingly to the other horses and sternly to the scared grooms, and soon the danger of a stampede was averted.

Then he remembered the cry that had rung out upon the silence like a pistol-shot. With a sickening sensation he realized what he had done.

Now not only Gordon, but everyone in the crowd gathered on the veranda, must know not only that he did not love the woman they supposed to be engaged to him, but also that his heart was given to another.

With the genius for generalship that is born in some men the Doctor took upon himself the handling of the awkward situation.

"You must not think of hunting to-day, Mrs. Williston," he said in the decisive tone of the physician.

Indeed, while Marian, though frightened for a moment, had regained her composure, Cynthia's nervousness was increasing. It was clear to North that she had heard his cry and realized the position his revelation had placed her in.

Marian gave no sign of having heard. Both hand and voice were steady as she put her arm around her cousin and tried to soothe her, presently succeeding in leading her into the house.

When the two had disappeared within the doorway the Doctor turned to the group. "I will stay with Mrs. Williston; she may need me," he said, "but the rest of you may as well have the day's sport. In fact, I think it will be better for our hostess if the house is quiet. May I have a word with you before you start?" he added to North.

Randal followed him into the library.

"Have you anything to say for yourself?" the Doctor demanded when the door was closed.

Randal made no reply, and the Doctor went on in heated tones: "After all, what can you say, what excuse can you have, for holding her up to the world as unloved by the man who asked her to marry him? Do you know what I intend to do? This very day I'm going to ask her

to marry me. I'm not going to thrust my love upon her,—I probably shall not even tell her of it,—but I am going to urge her to be my wife so that she can show the world that someone knows the value of the jewel whose worth you have all along seemed incapable of appreciating. I do not consult you in the matter, you have forfeited your right, and as for Mrs. Williston, I am quite certain that even though she may love you, she will not marry you now.

"Oh North, North, I am ashamed for you. You should have had more wit, more self-control. In that moment when the life of the woman I love hung in the balance my heart was torn too, but did I lose my senses and shout her name to the skies?"

"You are of the stuff of which heroes are made," responded North. "I am just an ordinary man."

"This is not a time for pretty speeches, and a poor excuse is worse than none," the Doctor said sternly. "That is all I have to say to you."

Randal turned towards the door. "I have no reply to make, nothing to say, until you have talked with Mrs. Williston," he responded. "Or, stay; I do want to give you a word of advice: When you ask her to marry you, tell her that you love her."

XXII.

LATE in the afternoon of the same day Marian was seated by a window that faced the western sky, when without any preliminary knock the door opened and Cynthia came in.

She was in street dress and her cheeks were flushed with the keen air. She had just returned from a drive with Doctor Gordon she told Marian as she advanced into the room, pulling off her gloves.

"They told me I should find you here," she said, not looking at her cousin.

Marian watched her in surprise. This was not the Cynthia she was accustomed to see. There was about her an air of shyness, of hesitation, wholly foreign to her.

Suddenly her steps quickened to a run, and the next instant she was on her knees with her head in Marian's lap.

"Oh Marian, Marian," she cried, "I am happy, so happy!"

To this speech her cousin made no reply, but stroked the other woman's hair in silence.

Presently Mrs. Williston lifted a face with something new and sweet in its beauty. "I'm going to marry Doctor Gordon," she said. "Marian, he loves me; he has loved me ever since I was a schoolgirl. As for me, I think I loved him from the first time I saw him. I used to be so afraid he would find it out that I hardly dared speak to him."

"But you are engaged to Mr. North!" exclaimed Marian in a puzzled way.

"Oh, that——" replied Mrs. Williston, and proceeded to acquaint her cousin with the truth concerning her strange compact with North.

"Who could foresee that things would get into such a tangle?" she added. "It wasn't long after we entered into our sham engagement that Mr. North discovered that the Doctor loved me. When Randal came to The Cedars he urged me to let him tell the Doctor the whole story, but I refused to do so. I feared Doctor Gordon must think less of me for being willing to act a part. Had I dreamed that he loved me——"

"How long had you and Mr. North agreed that this strange arrangement should last?" Marian spoke quickly.

"We had set no time. Mr. North left the matter with me. I intended to end the pretence soon after he came to The Cedars, but he was taken ill, and, of course, I could do nothing until he recovered; people would have thought me utterly heartless. After that—well, I grew stubborn and would not set him free."

Marian's cheeks flushed. "Why?" she asked as if the question were put against her will.

Mrs. Williston rose to her feet and turned to the window. "I thought Doctor Gordon was in love with you," she replied slowly, "and I was determined he should have first chance to win you.

"Ah Marian," continued Cynthia after a pause, "you don't know how glad I am to be loved. Oh, I know what you would say—you care something for me, and a great many people admire my clothes and my good looks, for which latter I am indebted to my taste in dress,—I should be positively ugly in the plain things you wear,—and others find my vivacity fascinating, but as to loving me—— Do you remember the day Mr. Townsend found a rare flower at the top of a steep mountain? To whom did he give that flower? To you. To whom do poor people and children come with their troubles?

"I grew so jealous of you and the love you inspire that I went away to that little village of Lisle. I'd read somewhere that when things went wrong it did one good to help someone else or to get near to nature, but neither did anything for me. While I was there I tried to be good to the people of the village, to enter into their lives and to help them. They gave me gratitude and admiration, but not love."

"One doesn't get love by giving gifts, but by giving love," Marian said half to herself. "But the man who has sent you flowers every day for the past two years?" she went on in another tone; "he must care for you very much."

Mrs. Williston turned so that Marian could not see her face.

"I am ashamed to tell you," she said, "but, after all, confession is good for the soul—once or twice in a lifetime. I shouldn't care to go

through it oftener. I ordered those flowers sent to myself from a florist's place in New York. I didn't do it for how it would look to other people: I liked to pretend that someone cared for me enough to send me flowers every day. Now you may laugh at me or despise me, whichever you like."

Without speaking, Marian rose and put her arm about her cousin.

"I see now that the fault was with myself." Cynthia still kept her face towards the window. "I lacked the something that inspires love: a soul perhaps it was; at any rate, I feel as if I'd just found mine.

"There's a phrase—oh, yes, 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal'—that describes me as I was. But you will see: I shall be different. I'm going to have the best of teachers, one who will show me how to be wise and good."

This was indeed a changed Cynthia, Marian thought.

Mrs. Williston moved towards the door.

"We women can pretend, as some of us have to, to be satisfied with the little things of life," she said, "but after all it is being loved that counts. You haven't congratulated me yet," she added with some of her old gayety.

"I am more glad than I can say," Marian replied warmly. "Doctor Gordon is—I can't tell you how fine I think he is."

"It seems like a miracle that he should have given his love to a butterfly like me," mused Cynthia. "When I thought he cared for you I couldn't help seeing how well suited you were to each other: you are both so much higher and finer than ordinary mortals like Mr. North and myself.

"I am going now to find Mr. North and release him from his engagement," she added with her hand on the door. "What a delighted man he'll be! I'm going to tell him too that I bear him no ill-will for what happened this morning; it was just retribution."

XXIII.

AFTER the interview with Cynthia in which he was given his freedom North went for a long walk alone. Now that he was free to go to Marian he felt a curious hesitation about doing so. But when dinner was over, and the others had gathered in the billiard-room at the top of the house to discuss the day's sport, North slipped away from them and betook himself to his study, wondering if Marian would come to practise as usual.

It was not long before he heard her playing. He sat still and listened. Ah, the quaint, sweet airs she chose and how lovingly she played them.

"Her music tells me that in spite of the fact that so many people

love her she is lonely as I am," he mused. "Ah Marian, Marian, what comrades we shall be if only——"

At this moment the music stopped suddenly and the musician began a new tune,—a love-song it was, so played that no words were needed.

When the last note had sounded North found himself in the room across the hall.

"Marian," he said softly.

She stopped playing and laid down her violin, but she did not turn towards him.

"Marian!" he spoke her name a second time.

"What have you to say to me?" he continued. "You must know that I love you, for I told you and all the world this morning."

Marian moved a few steps away from him.

"But I want to hear you say it to me alone," she said, a note in her voice worth waiting a lifetime to hear.

North took her in his arms. "You love me?" he whispered.

"Did you not know it?"

"Know it! I thought you cared for Gordon."

Marian laid a hand upon his arm. "I admire him," she said, "but it is you I love." Something in the gesture more than in her words told North that she was proud to love him, and his heart thrilled.

"Mrs. Williston has told me that she is going to marry Gordon." Randal brought the conversation to every-day topics to hide his deeper feeling. "The news was a surprise to me; I thought she disliked him."

"Any woman would have known better than that," replied Marian laughingly. "I guessed the truth some time ago."

"I wish you could have let me into the secret," remarked Randal; "then I could have told him and he could have told her and—she would have released me sooner."

"So you could jump out of the frying-pan into the fire?" queried Marian. "I warn you that I shall not be satisfied with a half-hearted devotion."

"You won't have to complain on that score," returned Randal. "Remember that I love you," he added earnestly, "and that I did not love Mrs. Williston; that makes all the difference in the world."

"And I love you, while Cynthia did not, and that too makes a difference," Marian said happily.

"How long have you known that I loved you?" queried North.

Marian hesitated. "A long time," she answered finally. "I think, ever since you told me so the day I played to you. It was a mad, ridiculous thing to do when you had known me so short a time, and yet something in my heart told me you spoke the truth. I could forgive you then, for I knew that the past was a blank to you, but I dreaded lest you might forget your duty and tell me a second time. It was hard

enough to endure your belonging to someone else; it would have broken my heart not to be able to believe in you."

"When——" Randal was beginning when his voice was drowned by a hum of talk and bursts of laughter as Mrs. Williston and her guests came down the stairs.

"How far away those people seem," mused Marian when the sounds had died away again. "How far away everyone seemed until you came," she added softly.

"I too have lived alone," said Randal. "Indeed, I think only those who serve the public know the rarity of true companionship. But I never wished it otherwise. I knew that some day I should find you and that you would be all the world to me."

Marian rose with a laugh that was half a sob. "I'm so absurdly happy that I want to cry," she said as she moved over to one of the windows.

Her lover followed her, and together they stood looking out into the clear, starlit night.

"Ah Marian, Marian," cried North in a low tone, "think of the life we shall live—together."



I UNDERSTAND

BY SEUMAS MACMANUS

WHEN your head once lay on my breast,
And your hand was closed in my hand,
You drew back the veil from your soul
And asked, Can you understand?

The letters that flamed in gold flame
On the virgin-whiteness I scanned—
"I love you, I love you, I love"—
And I whispered, I understand.

I thought I did. Foolish we be.
I, in Sorrow's intense solitude,
Where the hours are infinite ages,
Fared far ere I understood.

Yesternight I lifted wet eyes
To the stars that were as the sands,
And cried, O my God! it is now,
It is now that my soul understands!

A ROMAN HOLIDAY

AN AMERICAN HOUSEKEEPER IN THE ETERNAL CITY

By Maud Howe



ROME, January 20, 1894.

ROME, which we reached to-day, is very much changed; imagine the Fountain of Trevi, all the principal streets, even many of the smaller ones, gleaming with electric lights!

We at once engaged an apartment bathed with sun in the Piazza di Spagna, sun from early morning till late afternoon. But when we moved into it, it was a cloudy day. The apartment which had been tropical with the sun when we hired it was arctic without it!

We interviewed our *padrona* (landlady), an immense woman, and demanded a fire.

"But, Excellency, it is not good for the health."

We told her we understood our health better than she, and reminded her that fires had been promised.

"Excellency, yes, if it makes cold; but to-day it makes an immense heat. *Diamini!* this saloon is a furnace."

The thermometer could not have stood above forty-two degrees, but she was not to be bullied or cajoled. Then J. went out and bought wood unbeknownst to her and lighted a fire in the parlor grate. All the smoke poured into the room. The *padrona* charged with fixed bayonets.

"Gentry, we are ruined! Not is possible to make fire here."

"Why did not you say so before?"

"Who could figure to himself that gentry so instructed would do a thing so strange?"

These people are so polite that this was an insult, meant as such, taken as such. In the end J. prevailed. A small fireplace was unearthed from behind the wardrobe in our bedroom. He worked like a stoker, but the badly constructed chimney swallowed all the heat. For three days I was never warm, save when in bed. Monday we forfeited three months' rent, paid in advance, and went, tame and crestfallen, to a *pension*, a sadder and a wiser pair.

PALAZZO SANTA CROCE, March 10, 1894.

The warm weather has come, bright and beautiful, and here we are again, in a furnished apartment, but with what a difference! These

pleasant rooms belong to a large double apartment of Marion Crawford's. That princely soul, having let the lower suite to the William Henry Hurlburts, lends us the pretty little suite he fitted up for the "four-in-hand," as he calls his quartette of splendid babes. We are to remain here till our own apartment is found. We have bought our linen, blankets, *batterie de cuisine*, and other beginnings of housekeeping, and yesterday—am I not my mother's own child?—I gave a tea-party for two American girls. They wanted to see some artists, so I asked the few I know, Apolloni (well named the big Apollo), Sartorio, and Mr. Roes, he who spoke of the cherubs in a certain Fra Angelico picture as "dose dear leetle angles bimbbling round in de corner." I invited also Mr. and Mrs. Muirhead; he is the author of the American Baedeker, the editor of all English Baedekers. I expected to see him bound in scarlet instead of dressed in hodden-gray. We had much tea, more talk, and most *panetone*—half bread, half cake, with *pignoli* and currants; when fresh, it seems the best thing to eat in the world, until you get it the next day toasted for breakfast, when it is better.

My rooms are still ablaze with yesterday's flowers. I bought for two francs in the Piazza di Spagna what I thought a very extravagant bunch of white and purple flags and white and purple lilacs, like those in our old garden at Green Peace. Helen came in a little later with a bunch twice as big and a glow of pink peonies added; in the middle of the tea-drinking Sartorio arrived with a gigantic armful of yellow gorse. Spring is really here! The trees are all green now. When we first came the stone pines were the chief glory; now the Pincio is gay with snow-white maple trees and flowering shrubs, mostly white and purple. Is there any rotation of color in flowers? It has often struck me there must be! Sometimes everything in blossom seems to be lilac, another season it is all yellow, then all red. I notice the reds come last, in midsummer chiefly,—has this to do with the heat? Max Nordau—cheerful person—says that red is hysterical people's favorite color; violet, melancholiacs'. There is a boy who sits all day under my window selling bird whistles, on which he warbles pleasantly. He is never without a red rosebud worn over his left ear. Wonder if he is hysterical!

Now that the good weather has come, I often go to the churches to hear the music. At the *festa* of Our Lady of Good Counsel the scholars of the Blind Institution furnished the music—a good band, though not equal to that of the Perkins Institution, in Boston. The church was crammed with very dirty people and many children. One mother carried a strapping yearling, a splendid angel of a child; three toddlers clung to her skirts, and a new-born baby howled in the grandam's arms. After a time the two women exchanged babies, the grandam took the heavy youngster, the mother took the new-born, and, squatting

down, calmly suckled it. The music was marred by the wailing of this and other infants, but no one seemed to mind. After all, it was the only way the women could have heard Mass; the little ones were too young to be left alone at home.

The Romans are devoted to their children, although their ways are not our ways; no woman of the better class nurses her child, baby carriages are unknown, and swaddling is still in vogue, at least with the lower classes. I know a young American lady, married to a Roman, who imported a perambulator for her first baby. The *balia*,—wetnurse,—a superb cow of a woman, refused to trundle it, saying she was not strong enough, although I saw her carry a heavy trunk upstairs on her head while I was calling at the house! The baby is now a big eighteen-months-old boy; every day the *balia* goes out to give him an airing, carrying him in her arms! Here, leading-strings are facts, not symbols. In Trastevere, where I went sightseeing yesterday with Helen,—peering, as she calls it,—the best sight we saw was a darling red-haired baby in leading-strings stumbling along in front of its grandmother. In the division of labor, the care of the children falls upon the grandmother; the mother's time is too valuable; if she is not actually employed in earning money, there is the heavier work of the household to do. To use the pet phrase of the boarders, "things are different here from what they are at home."

PALAZZO RUSTICUCCI, July 10, 1894.

Here we are in a home of our own! One moonlight night J. came in with the news that he had found the very apartment he had been looking for; if I didn't mind, we would go and see it at once. Naturally, I didn't "mind." We took a *botte* and threaded the network of narrow streets that lead down to the Tiber. We crossed the river, a huge brown flood, silver where it swirled about the piers; drove past the Castle of St. Angelo to the dingy old palace at the junction of the Borgo Nuovo and the Piazza San Pietro. He would not let me stop to look at anything, but hurried me through the entrance, along the corridor, past a courtyard with orange-trees and a fountain where the nightingales were singing, up a high, wide stairway guarded by recumbent statues of terra-cotta Etruscan ladies to a rusty old green door. We pulled a bell-rope and set a bell jangling inside. The door was opened by the *esattore*,—agent—a brisk young man, who carried a three-beaked brass lamp by whose light we explored the apartment. They hurried me so that I could only see that the high ceilings were of carved wood, that the windows were large, and that I liked the shape of the rooms. J. kept saying, "Wait till you see the terrace." The terrace, or house-top, is a flat roof; it covers the whole length and breadth of the apartment, and belongs exclusively to it. A parapet

three feet high runs around it; at one end is a small room with a second smaller terrace on its roof, reached by a flight of stone steps; at the other end is a high wall with a little, open belfry on top. The view is sublime; you look down into the Square of St. Peter's with the Egyptian obelisk in the middle, Bernini's great colonnade on either side, the Church of St. Peter's at the end, with the Vatican, a big, awkward mass of a building, behind it, and in the foreground the twin fountains sending up their columns of powdered spray. On the left loomed the Castle of St. Angelo; it was light enough to see the time by the clock. You can imagine all the rest,—the city spread out like a map, the dark masses of trees marking the Pincio and the Villa Borghese, the Campagna, the Sabine and the Alban hills beyond, Mt. Soracte, our familiar friend, on the left, over and under all the soft, deep notes of the big bell of St. Peter's throbbing out the Angelus.

The bargain was struck that very night! But when we went over the next day J. let the cat out of the bag by saying, "I was afraid if you went by daylight, and saw what an old ruin it was, you would never consent to our taking it!"

It did look discouraging. The last tenant, a *Monsignore*, who lived here thirty years, never allowed the owners to make any repairs; he said he could not be bothered with workmen. He died a short time ago, leaving a red rose growing in a wooden half barrel on the terrace. The owner of the palace, Signor Mazzocchi, armorer to the Pope, waited till the new tenant should turn up before making any changes. The palace was built in 1661. It has gone to wrack and ruin, but it is a magnificent old wreck. It stands on the site of the house the great architect Bramante built for Raphael, one pier of which is still standing, built into our walls. It once belonged to a Cardinal Rusticucci, whose arms are cut in stone over one of the doors; he was of the same family as the gentleman Dante met in one of the lower circles of the Inferno.

"Ed io, che posto son con loro in croce, Jocoipo Rusticucci fui; è certo la fiera moglie più ch'altro mi nuoce." "And I who am placed on the cross with these was Jacob Rusticucci. It is certain my proud wife harmed me more than another!"

The palace seems to be called indifferently Rusticucci, Accoromboni, and Mazzocchi. We hesitated for some time between the three names; finally the Dantesque name carried the day, and I have had Palazzo Rusticucci engraved upon our cards. It is considered very plebeian here to have your names on your cards, but I cling to my American ideas.

The Monsignore's red rose on the terrace looked so lonely that I went last Wednesday to Rag Fair in the Campo dei Fiori and bought a pink ivy geranium, some pansies, and a white carnation to keep it

company; they were absurdly cheap; flowers are a necessity here, not a luxury. I also bought a sack of earth, some flower-pots, and a watering-can. I got up at dawn the next morning and potted my plants; hard work! When J. came up at seven o'clock for coffee, there they stood in a row at the end of the terrace. It was a real surprise; I was very proud, till I found that he had to do the work all over again, just because I had not put anything in the bottom of the flower-pots to keep the earth from running out when they are watered! J. says we must have more, many more, plants. Sunday he was pottering about all day with the plumber. We are to have another *quartarolo* of water laid on, the pipes carried to the upper terrace, and a vast Florentine flower-pot—you know the kind, *terra cotta*—for the receiver. Some day we mean to have a marble sarcophagus in its place. They took the beautiful long zinc bath-tub for the tank; this was a blow, but Pompilia and Philamena found it too convenient. Every one who has seen it on the upper terrace says, "Do you take your bath up here?" It is not easy to laugh at this inevitable joke; I wait for it now from each new visitor, and feel relieved to get it over.

The terrace is our poetry, and we have parlous good prose downstairs. The walls are three feet thick, built to keep out both heat and cold; the whole house is paved with red, white, and black tiles in geometrical designs. The old green door opens into a vestibule leading to the *antecamera*, which has two big windows. The *salotto* opens from this; it has a splendid *sei cento* carved wood ceiling, and pale Nile-green doors with gilt mouldings and handles. The dining-room, square and high, leads from the *salotto*; beyond is a charming room with a fresco of Apollo driving the horses of the sun. This will be our guest-room when we have a guest; it is now my den. On the other side of the *salotto* is our yellow bedroom: the nicest room I have ever lived in; it has a vaulted stone ceiling. Do you remember Tennyson's poem?

"O darling room, my heart's delight,
Dear room, the apple of my sight,
With thy two couches soft and white,
There is no room so exquisite,
No little room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write."

Well, ours is just like that. These rooms are in the front of the palace, looking down into the Piazza San Pietro and facing *mezzo giorno*, due south. They all have fireplaces (J. put them in himself with the aid of Lorenzo), the sun pours into them, and if one can be warm in Rome, in winter, we shall be. From the passage outside the kitchen a small stone stairway leads up past a tiny oratory to the terrace. The oratory is charming in shape, not quite round, more like

an ellipse with two marble seats. The floor slopes to the middle, where there is a grating to let the rain out, for it is open to the sky; its dome is a minute replica of the Pantheon's. The Monsignore must have sat here to read his "hours;" there is nothing to distract the mind, nothing to see but the sky and clouds overhead and the low-flying *rondinelli* swooping across and across at sunset.

In the salotto (Filamena sometimes calls it the salotino, to my rage) there is a handsome sofa and pair of armchairs, a fine black oak table, and my Benares tray and stand for tea. The rest of the furniture is very meek and cane-bottomed. We have in this room a lovely landscape of the Campagna by Sartorio, a silver-point drawing by Hughes, the English artist, and a cast from the Alhambra.

July 28, 1894.

Thirty-six Centigrade for the last three days! Those clever children of yours will know how hot that really is. I don't know, but people mop their brows a good deal, and say that the heat of this summer is "unprecedented and incredible." It troubles me very little; once or twice only I have felt rather tired by it, and I fancy it is sharpening up my temper a little; but I eat and sleep like several tops, only I can't do much of anything out-of-doors. Yesterday I went to see the friendly Countess C., who has a small city garden with shade-trees, under which we sat and consumed iced wine and cakes, and talked about the Pope. She is an American and very Black in her politics, though her husband is a White and fought for Victor Emmanuel.

At the suggestion of Mr. Richard Greenough I have adopted the Roman scheme of life and divide every day into two. I am up at five, have my coffee, and read my paper on the terrace. At eight the rooms are hermetically sealed; outside shutters, windows, and inside blinds are closed. A melancholy twilight pervades, except in my den, where I keep one eye of the house open to read, write, cipher, and catch fleas by. I go out early, do my errands, make my visits, and try to be at home by ten; sometimes I am delayed till twelve. Luncheon is at one; after this the whole household, the whole city, takes its *siesta*. From two till four Rome sleeps! Down in the piazza the workmen lie at full length on the pavement, their arms under their heads. Cabmen curl up inside their cabs, horses sleep between the shafts, even small boys sleep! At first I would none of it. I only yielded when I found that the soldiers in the barracks opposite are obliged by the military regulations to take a daily siesta.

"And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?"

Soon after four o'clock the sea-breeze comes up and life begins again. By five I am ready for tea on the terrace. Sometimes we go instead to Ronzi and Singer's for *granite*, a sort of sherbet made of snow from the mountains flavored with coffee or lemon, very delicious and cooling to the blood. By this time the streets are filled with people. The Roman girls look charming in their pretty light summer dresses; pink muslin seems to be the fashion this season. Dinner gets pushed back later and later; we really must reform. Last night we did not sit down till quarter to nine. The nights are divinely cool; we go to the terrace from the dinner-table, and sit there till bedtime under the friendly stars.

To-day I have been driving in the Villa Pamfili Doria; for proof accept this pink petal from the Egyptian lotus in the lake. I never saw them growing before. They are wonderful; the pads immense, with a velvety surface on which the water rolls up into crystal balls; the flower, when it is closed, large and pointed like a classic flame, does not lie on the water, as I supposed, but stands erect, some eight or ten inches above it. My uncle and a few other privileged people are allowed to drive here even when the Villa is closed to the public. We always meet a modest-looking old couple in a coupé; he is blind and has a long white beard; she wears a bonnet like a bat and carries a green fan with which she screens her eyes. Cardinal A., his secretary walking beside him, two attendants following, is always there, and several other priests; except for these, an occasional gardener, and the peacocks we have the glorious old place all to ourselves. There are deer and Jersey cows and the lake and the pretty formal garden in front of the house; it has the feeling of being private property—a gentleman's place. The name "Mary," clipped in box on the hillside in memory of a beloved wife, an English Princess Doria, gives me the same sort of satisfaction as the Taj Mahal and the tomb of Cæcilia Metella.

Your last letter clamors for details of our housekeeping. In certain respects it is idyllic. For comfort I have never known its equal. We have two women, Filamena, the Umbrian housemaid and waitress, and Pompilia, my black-browed Tuscan cook (Romans do not make good servants). These two do the work easily with the help of old Nena, the fifth wheel to our coach. Helen calls her the footman; she does all our errands, carries my notes, and when I am hard pressed for time leaves our cards. Pompilia brings me her accounts every morning, so much for beef, bread, butter, spaghetti, wine, oil, and salt. I buy my fruit and groceries myself. So much custom allows. It is more *signorile*, however, to leave all buying to your servants, but a certain latitude, of which I have availed myself, is allowed to artists. Store-rooms and ice-chests are unknown; we live from hand to mouth, buying each day's provisions fresh and fresh. The butchers shut up

shop at eleven in the morning and do not open again till six in the evening. Business begins at the shriek of dawn; the first sound I hear in the early gray is the sharpening of the butcher's knife in the shop opposite. They keep the meat in cool "grottos" underground. How they manage without ice is a mystery!

The Borgo, our quarter,—Leonine City is its best name,—is not fashionable, and the street-cries are still in full force here. The earliest is the Acetosa water, "*Fiasche fresche aqua 'Cetosa!*" I hear it in my dreams, plaintive, melodious, "Flasks of fresh Acetosa water!" Then comes the rumbling of the cart, the hee-hawing of the donkey, and the remarks of the man to the donkey. This is what he said to-day: "I call all the apostles to observe this infamous beast of a donkey; may he die squashed, the son of a hangman!" I do assure you he is the dearest donkey, pretty and willing, but rather restive about stopping. The Acetosa Spring is a mile and a half from the city, out Viale Parioli way. It has been in use since the days of the Cæsars, perhaps since the days of the Tarquins. The Romans take a course of Aqua 'Cetosa every summer; six weeks is the orthodox time; it is "cooling to the blood." It costs two cents a flask.

Signor Augusto Rotoli has written out for me the notes of several of the cries. In the Acetosa score he has indicated the blows of the driver, the kicks of the donkey, and finally the patter-patter of the poor little beastie's hoofs over the rough paving-stones of the Borgo Nuovo:

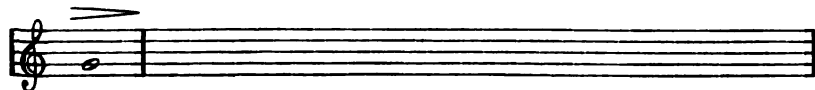
VENDITORE DELL' AQUA ACETOSA.

Nel silenzio del mattino, all' alba, in distanza, e poi piu presso alla residenza—questo è un effetto molto caratteristico.*

TENORE.

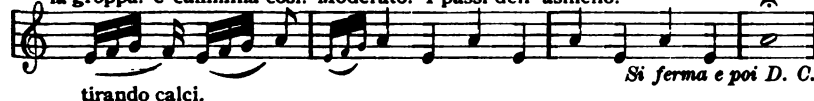


Fre - sca, Fre - sca, l'a - qua a - ce - to - sa



kaaaaa Dando una bastonata al povero asinello che alza

la groppa. e cammina così. Moderato. I passi dell' asinello.



tirando calci.

Si ferma e poi D. C.

* In the stillness of the morning at dawn, in the distance, and then nearer to the residence—this has a very characteristic effect.

At seven o'clock a herd of twenty goats is driven into the piazza by two dark satyrs with shaggy thighs and flashing eyes, peasants in goat-

skin trousers they are from the Campagna. The children crowding round them in the piazza, and I looking down from my terrace, watch them as they milk their yellow-eyed beasts. Goats' milk, Pompilia says, is good for consumptives and delicate babies; I have not yet learned whether she considers it heating or cooling to the blood. We are not allowed to have *broccoli*, carrots, or mutton at this season because they are heating, and are obliged to have more rennet than we like because it is cooling!

After the goats are gone the blackberry man comes. I like his cry best of all, it is in a melancholy minor, "*More, more, chi vuol maniar le more?—more fate!*" "Moors, moors, who wishes to eat moors?—ripe moors!" Moors, if you please, because they are black!

IL VENDITORE DI MORE.

Se suppone una voce di Tenore aperta.



"Buy a broom" is far prettier in Italian—Romanesque, I should say—than in English. At first we could not make out the words, the man seemed to be singing "O! so far away!" The notes, long drawn out, pensive, fascinating, like a sailor's chantey, haunted us. "*O! scopare cacc' aragni!*" "O brooms, chase the spiders!" The latter are Turks' heads on the ends of a long stick, necessary for ceilings twenty feet high like ours.

LO SCOPARO.

Nella folla del giorno nel frastuono di carrozze e veicoli questo tono minore è molto rimarchevole.*



* In the crowd of the day, in the tumult of carriages and carts, this minor air is very noticeable.

VENDITORE DI PESCE.

Con quest' altro.



"*Pesce vivo, calamaretti!*" "Live fish, little inkstands!" The calamaretti, small cuttle-fish, are called little inkstands because of the black liquid—sepia, isn't it?—which they eject when attacked. Fried a golden brown and served with fresh soles as a garnishing they are too good for common people.

The umbrella mender is a bit of a poet, he makes his cry rhyme. "*Ombrellare. Che ha ombrelle per raccomandare?*" "The umbrella man. Who has umbrellas to mend?"

"*O ricotta, ricotta!*" When I hear this I run to the window, wave my handkerchief, and the ricotta man brings up a fresh goat's milk cheese in a green wicker basket; it is a sort of spiritualized cottage cheese. When quite new, eaten with *maritozzi* warm from the bakery downstairs, it makes a better luncheon than I can get at the Café di Roma.

"*Alice!*" (pronounced a-lee-chee) "anchovies," is a strident cry which we hear at intervals all day. Anchovies are a staple food with the lower classes. At home I only remember them as an appetizer at some brutally long dinner parties. The people eat anchovies with bread or with macaroni; they are cheap, strong, and a little of them goes a long way. We have them with *crustini* and *provatura* for luncheon sometimes. *Provatura* is cheese made of buffalo's milk. Little crusts of bread with alternate layers of *provatura* and anchovies skewered together like chickens' livers and toasted make a pleasant dish.

One cry I do not like, "*Aqua Vita!*" short and sharp in the early morning. As soon as the newsboys begin to shout "*Don Quichotte,*" "*Popolo Romana,*" "*Corriere,*" this cry comes like an antiphony. "*Aqua vita!*" "Water of life?" Water of death! brandy.

We sent all the way to the English bakery in Via Babuino for our bread till the day I met Count Luigi Primoli in the baker's shop on the ground floor of our palace; he was tucking a brown paper parcel into his pocket. There had been a function at the Vatican. He had been to pay his respects to Leo XIII., and on his way home had stopped to buy what he told me were the best *maritozzi* in Rome. The baker is an important person; he owns his shop and four caged nightingales, which sing divinely. We now buy our bread, flour, macaroni, and oil from him, and he changes all the neat fifty-franc notes we get from the banker's; he can always be trusted to give honest money.

I soon found out that in all domestic affairs I must learn Italian methods; it was useless to try and teach Pompilia and Filamena our ways. After the tussle over the washing I gave it up. Set tubs, washboards, wringing-machines? Nothing of that sort. Sunday evening the clothes are put in a large copper vessel, a basketwork cover is laid on top, over which a layer of wood-ashes is spread, then boiling water is poured on slowly, percolating a little at a time through the clothes, which are bleached by the lye of the ashes; this is the *bucato*. When they have stood long enough in this witch's cauldron the clothes are carried down to the basement and washed with cold water in the vast stone fountains of the palace, which we have the right to use one day in the week. The women employ a stiff brush and the queerest green

soap to scrub the linen; if we have any table-cloths left at the end of six months, we shall be lucky. The American clothes-pins and line I sent for are neatly displayed in the kitchen as curiosities. We "hang out" on an iron clothes-line to which the linen is tied by small pieces of twine, as it was in the days of the Empress Faustina. We are no better than our mothers! The clothes are sent out to a *stiratrice* to be ironed.

Our cooking-fuel costs us one dollar a week. Saturday morning the *carbonero* arrives carrying on his back a huge sack of charcoal, for which I pay five francs. I am told it is ten cents too much, but one must pay something for being "forestieri." The cooking is done over four little square holes filled with charcoal, set in a table of blue and white tiles; a big hood overhead carries off the fumes; quite the prettiest kitchen range I ever saw! The charcoal is kindled by means of paper, little fagots, and a turkey-feather fan plied by old Nena. I like my kitchen, it is full of such queer, nice pots and pans; a row of deceitful copper saucepans hang along the wall, always bright, never used, but brushed over with white of egg, which acts like a varnish to protect the polish; a big white marble mortar, a long copper kettle for the fish, and the green and yellow bowls and mixing dishes are my favorite utensils. I foresee that the old brass *scaldino* J. picked up at the junk shop will some day serve as an ornament to the front hall at home. We have a brace of warming-pans and the queerest metal box for live charcoal. When you want a warm bath you fill your tub with cold water, put hot coals in this box, screw it up tight, and put it into the water, which it finally heats. Prehistoric? Fortunately, we prefer our baths cold! Pompilia begged some slips from our geraniums, planted them in empty kerosene cans, and now the kitchen window is bright with flowers. Everything grows so quickly here that it is easier to have plants than not.

August 16th.

The *paroco* (parish priest) has called. Filamena came all of a flutter to summon me. The visit has raised us in our servants' eyes; they have never before lived with pagans or Protestants. I like the *paroco*. He is a fine man of forty-five, a peasant, with that assured, courteous manner the priests all have; it is wonderful, the bearing and polish the church gives them. The *paroco* was rather disturbed at being offered a cup of tea at five in the afternoon,—it was stupid of me to have it brought in; the Anglo-Saxon association of eating and drinking with sociability is hard to get rid of,—but he made a long visit and gave me good advice about the local charities. The gnawing poverty all about us is the drop of gall in our honeypot. Our door is literally besieged by our poor neighbors and by begging monks and nuns. At the *paroco*'s suggestion we now divide what we can afford

to give between the benevolent society which looks after the sick and old, the Trinitarian order of monks, and the Little Sisters of the Poor. Besides these a man calls every Saturday from the "Holy Family" and carries away a big bag filled with *robaccio*,—trash,—things that at home would go into the ash-barrel.

General Booth must have got his idea of the Household Brigade from some such institution, and I am learning new lessons in economy every day! Nothing is wasted here, not the tiniest scrap of food nor the most disreputable cast-off garment. They watch for my old shoes; three pairs of eyes are fastened on them daily. You know how much more precious old shoes are than new,—especially Appleton's, which come all the way from Boston? Well, yesterday I was shamed into giving away my most cherished old boots and am wearing to-day a horrid stiff new pair. Every night a bundle is smuggled out of the house full of odds and ends of food which support a certain poor family whose grandmother has attached herself to us. Her perquisites are the old newspapers, empty bottles, stale cake and bread, sour milk, the very orange and lemon peels, and the leavings from the servants' table. I am so thankful there is enough to fill the poor old blue market handkerchief, but it would never do for me to show knowledge of its existence.

You ask about the comparative expense of life here. People who would be called well off at home are rich in Rome; people we should consider poor can live here with much comfort and some luxury. For instance, cabs cost sixteen cents a course for two people, or forty cents an hour. I pay my seamstress fifty cents a day and my cook seven dollars a month; a clever young Italian doctor, modern, up-to-date, well educated, is quite satisfied with a dollar a visit. Good hotels (not the two or three most extravagant) charge twelve francs (about two dollar and forty cents) a day. Meat, chicken, eggs, fish, fruit, and vegetables are cheap; but all imported groceries are horribly dear by reason of the fifty per cent. duty they must pay. Coffee costs fifty cents a pound, sugar twenty, American kerosene oil is sold in five-gallon cans for three dollars—fancy! we pay more for petroleum than for olive oil or for wine. Postage stamps, salt, and tobacco—all government monopolies—are sold only at tobacconists'. Milk is not cheap; the best in Rome comes from Prince Doria's herd of Jerseys. Unfortunately, we are not on his milkman's route; our milk comes from the Villa Ada, which belongs to an American lady, a daughter of Rogers, the sculptor. It is very good milk, quite different from that we get at a pinch from the *vaccaria* round the corner, where in a dark, dreadful dungeon stable pale cows with long, untrimmed hoofs pass their melancholy lives. Pompilia is in despair because we will drink our milk unboiled; when I saw the prisoner cows I understood why. Italy is a poor country, and poor people can live comfortably here. Rents, ser-

vice, and food are all cheap; it may be a paltry reason for abandoning one's country that one can get more pork for one's shilling elsewhere, but it is a potent reason. Here in Rome prices are all scaled to the different pockets. I pay less at the same shops for the same things than my rich friends pay, but some things even the rich cannot secure; certain conveniences—rapid transit, steam heat, "rapid delivery," express service—cannot be purchased, and, what is really serious, good schooling is not to be had at any price, so few Americans with children to educate settle in Rome. But for men and women there is no school like Rome. Willy nilly, I learn something every time I go out-of-doors, whether it be to the Appian Way, the Via Sacra, the Forum, or to the Corso. The yellow Tiber, the fountains, the nightingales of the Villa Medici, the ilex trees of the Borghese, seem to whisper the secrets of the city with the mighty past, the mother and law-giver of nations.



THE PURPLE VOICES

BY ALOYSIUS COLL

<p>WE met in a shadowy forest, Beside a limpid lake; Our hearts were bitter rivals, And one must bleed and break!</p>	<p>Down! down! I thought to bury The purple of the past In every closing ripple I counted for the last.</p>
<p>We parried in the gloaming, We crushed the tender grass, We matched our strength and cunning— All for a little lass!</p>	<p>But through and through the flowers, And through and through the wood, I heard the purple voices Staining the solitude.</p>
<p>He slept—oh fatal instant! I ran him through and through; He kissed the lowly mosses With lips of purple dew!</p>	<p>The birches, pale, reproachful, Were tremulously still, As souls aghast at murder Who quake against their will.</p>
<p>I flung his loveless body Into the silent lake; Our hearts were bitter rivals, And one was doomed to break!</p>	<p>The sorrowing moss uplifted Its chalice from the wood, As children of a martyr Begging his sacred blood.</p>

Adown the flowery hedges,
And through and through the wood,
I heard the purple voices
Staining the solitude.

THE BROKEN VASE

By Marcelle Endicott



LEILA MATTHEWS had no present worth mentioning and very little past. She took an intelligent, conscientious view of life and had a rescuing sense of humor. When she left Mt. Hope, Arkansas, to take the place of Latin teacher in one of the unfashionable New York schools everybody had thought her a lucky girl. She bore the fatal reputation of being clever and artistic,—that is to say, she had the ability to appreciate things that in the natural course of events she would never have the opportunity to enjoy. Wherever she went she created that sympathetic atmosphere encouraging to people's vanity, which aided her even in crudely sociable Mt. Hope.

She had always lived with her aunt and cousins, and she sent the nasal-voiced old lady, whom she tenderly loved, a monthly remittance from her earnings.

Ever since she could remember, with the exception of a single year, she had led the deadening life of Mt. Hope. When she was a flower of a girl, eighteen or thereabouts, she spent a year in New York and abroad as companion to an old aristocrat, who realized the girl's inborn gentility and loved her. Leila was recalled to the bedside of her aunt, and her influential friend died suddenly in Etretat, so the girl settled down cheerfully, if not gayly, to the unescapable Mt. Hope. She was pretty, of the ephemeral blonde type, and she saw her bloom rubbed off year by year. She had no laces and furs to soften the sharpening angles, and though she tried to propitiate herself by cultivating a sweeter, more unselfish smile, she found it poor stuff compared to a young look in the line of the cheek and laughing eyes. Still she went to church socials, drove out with the grocer's son, and allowed people to patronize her.

Her mother had been a Boston woman, her father a rich mine owner who lost his fortune at a single venture and inconsiderately died before he had a chance to retrieve it. The mother did not survive long, and Leila, then a baby of five, was left destitute. A poor relative, her father's aunt, adopted the orphan and devoted herself to the child. Deep in the girl's heart, however, was a pride in her mother's people which made her hold herself with a dignity the country folk did not understand. There were also vague reminiscences of a lovely person wearing a chain of glittering blue stones whom she called "Mamma."

When Leila returned from Europe she brought back with her a gold cross that she always wore, a tender letter or so, and the memory of a few blissful hours when her hand had rested in his. There was even a rapture, albeit broken-hearted, that the finely bred New Yorker had cared for her in a negligent, summer fashion, and in unguarded moments had said impetuous things. Because he had called her his "mughetto Fiorentino" and kissed her hand with reverent grace she was not deceived. She could hardly help loving him, poor child, not only for what he was, but for what he represented. She knew he had forgotten what he had said, and she also knew that she would never remember anything else. How he had adored beauty, the man! If she should see him again, she liked to imagine herself gowned in a flowing silver crepe, touched by scarlet,—perhaps at the throat, to accentuate her spiritual prettiness, and her blonde hair, thinner now, running in sunshiny curves around her ears. Then she laughed at herself heartily for a morbid fool, and went on doing her tasks in her cheap gowns, trying to gain the habit of smiling in the heart as well as on the lips.

She had been thankful since her stay in New York that she had never chanced upon her former lover. She was moderately happy in her work, her sense of fulfilled duty, and her facile talent for absorbing what was healthy in character and comforting in nature and circumstance. She finished each day with the same thanksgiving for the happiness of the past, and the same prayer for the man, alive or dead.

One day, one dark afternoon, when she was at the Lenox Library taking notes for her class, she saw him. He was slightly older looking, the chin surer, the bearing more distinguished than formerly, but the sensitive lips were unchanged. He had the unmistakable poise of a man secure alike of his grandfather and his investments, two unrivalled means of confidence. She had not heard of the man since his marriage, when she had sent his fiancée a brooch, a crown of pearls, as a wedding-gift. Heaven knows what months she had worked on articles for the *Mt. Hope Courier* to pay the jeweller; then the faded neckties she had worn and the hats retrimmed three seasons with the same dismal perpetual violets! She had written a short note accompanying her present:

"Will Miss Van Dyck accept a souvenir, a very small souvenir, from me? I have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Markham and wish to offer some gift to show how pleasantly I recall his courtesies, etc., etc.,"—a thoroughly polite note expressed with impersonal formality, as if pearl crowns were an every-day occurrence; as if she were not writing with her heart's blood. The man was rather surprised, and sent it to Helen Van Dyck, his fiancée. She wore it several times and later on gave it to her French maid,—Henriette did her hair so cleverly and she had a "faible" for pearls.

Markham strolled into the library as Leila was leaving. She attempted to walk away unobserved, but his eyes fastened on her questioningly, then cleared with recognition.

Oh! he had recognized her, was coming towards her! His step, which she had not heard for twelve years, seemed to tread on her heart. She stopped, trying to assume a genial air—if possible, to make him forget that her hair was straight, her skin colorless, her face thin. She thanked God for the dim light in the hall.

"This is indeed fortunate," said his polite voice with well-bred interest. "Won't you tell me the pleasant things you have been doing since we last saw each other?"

She wished to evince a quiet pleasure at seeing him again, and she was resolved not to be plaintive or voluble. "Faithful to your old acquaintances, as usual," she said, glancing towards the books of the library.

"My old friends, you should say," he responded with polite meaning. If there had only been in his tone one shade of real reminiscence, the pity over a sweet trifle dead! In her despair she wanted to save herself by the role of gentle calm, but her voice faltered.

"I am spending the winter in New York for a change,—in fact—I—I—am teaching school. It's great fun." She hurried sensitively on: "I enjoy it immensely. May I inquire for Mrs. Markham?"

"Thank you, she is extremely well, and Phil is a fine lad."

"What! is there a Phil?"

"There is," he said, laughing boyishly. "Junior is five years old."

"Mercy!" she exclaimed in astonishment. Something cut her to the quick as the child's image rose before her. She raised her hand with a coquettish gesture, a little prettiness that had survived the other charms, and pulled the ribbon higher on her throat to hide the line where the skin had wrinkled a little.

"I am distressed," she said with mock seriousness; "it is a rainy day, and one has a more than ever old-maidish look in a rainy-day gown."

She laughed, trying to make it sound the old, frank note. Markham, being dulled by the happiness in his own life, scarcely heeded her sorry little play. She was an old flirtation, a good girl—well, she had faded, as they always do. The pathetic dowdiness, the undisguised "getting old" that was so evident to herself did not pain or annoy him, because to him it was of such small moment. In her mind his idea of her had been everything. She had sacrificed herself stoically to it. She had had the feeling that their acquaintance was like an unbroken idyl, covered by dust and cobwebs perchance, but, brush them off, and the idyl, like a fragile vase, would be there—beautiful as ever. He had

known her young, full of blithe grace. He must remember her so. This ideal was broken now irretrievably.

Despair burdened Leila, but she chatted pleasantly on. She inquired about the boy, the villa in the Pyrenees, and touched lightly on whatever might interest the man.

"May I not have your address?" he asked cordially. "We shall doubtless not meet again by accident."

"I know where you live," she answered, with a brightness not intensified, as of old, by her cheeks and eyes, "but my address is so far away, and long distances are such discouragers of good intentions," she answered evasively. "Au revoir"—she nodded gracefully and kept her eyes on his face until she had whirled her awkward skirt out of the door. Then she took a cross-town car in an alarmed hurry lest he might follow her and find out where she lived.

Markham, however, had scarcely remarked the girl. He strolled to the club and dined later at home. His wife, in a pale velvet dinner-gown that became her languid grace, greeted him in the salon. Standing in the chastened light of Venetian lamps, she was very gratifying to any man's pride. Philip Markham bowed to her gallantly.

"How appropriate you are, Helen. You are not a day over twenty, my dear. None of us keep spring that way. How do you do it?"

She leaned playfully towards him. "You do it; you make me happy, and I look so—voilà tout! What have you done to-day?"

"Nothing much; lounged about the Knickerbocker, bought some horses, and, oh, yes, I dropped into the Library—the Lenox. By the way, I ran across a girl I used to know, a teacher; that is, she wasn't a teacher when I knew her; we said 'Hello' to each other." At this instant Junior ran into the room. "Bless the boy! Come to Papa, Phil," cried Markham. "Jove, what a lad! He'll soon be sailing the yacht for Papa,—I say, he's a trim chap—a kiss—there, run back to M. Guillaume. The infant can hardly speak an English word decently. You know, Helen, I'm in favor of sending him to Oxford."

He never remembered afterwards that he had asked Leila to send him her address and that she had not done it. That evening the Markhams engaged a table at Sherry's, where they drove after the opera. Plancon was singing in the "Huguenots."

As for the school teacher, she excused her silence at dinner under plea of a headache. Indeed, her cheeks were flushed. "If they had but been pink when I met him," she thought bitterly. "If I had worn my mackintosh,—that is stylish, at least,—and my best gloves that are darned only on the inside, and, oh, if I had only curled my hair!" She felt childishly disappointed: he had not once mentioned the pearl brooch. It would have been easy for him to have made some allusion to it,—at least, he could not have been ashamed of her taste.

She turned wearily on her pillow that night after she had corrected her papers, laid them away in neat little piles on her desk, braided her hair, and put on the cheap gown, guiltless of lace or other prettiness, so becoming to a lovely woman, so solacing to a plain one. She kissed her aunt's picture vehemently, but it did not cheer her up. She lay crying silently so as not to wake the children near. "Why could he not have left me in peace! Now the memory's gone, all I had left," she sobbed. "All I had left was to feel he remembered me young and fresh and to be desired."

Someone knocked at her door. "Yes," she answered in her worn, gentle voice.

"To-morrow you will rise a little earlier, Miss Matthews, to take the children walking as far as the Park."

"Certainly, Madam," assented Leila.

The principal lumbered down the hall, and the sound of her retreating footsteps irritated Leila absurdly. She whispered the word bitterly to herself, "to-morrow."

The nocturnal clatter was hushed on the streets when she finally slipped off into a nervous, troubled sleep.



THE LIGHT IS WOVEN ABOUT YOU

BY ERNEST RHYS

THE light is woven about you,
Yellow and purple and red,
All woven into a whiteness,
Or caught in small petals about you,
As white as the whitethorn shed.

The light is a garment about you,
As you go glancing by,
A spirit of pity and brightness:
By the dewdrops that gleam all about you,
I dream you are come from the sky.

The light is woven about you,
Yellow and purple and red,
All woven into a whiteness,
But the fairest rays, and the rarest.
Weave the halo for your head.

THE MODERN SABINE

By E. Ayrton



I.

M R. INGRAM was strolling about the rooms at one of the chief public soirées of the London season. He felt consciously at it and not a part of it. The air, supersaturated with light and color, weighed oppressively on his eyelids, and he was dazed by the din of small talk that crushed the music of the Hungarian band into mere intermittent bursts of noise. "And we call ourselves a civilized nation," he murmured with a nervous quiver of distaste.

A tall palm stretched out its leaves protectingly, and Ingram took shelter behind it. He had never outgrown a certain boyish shyness, which was typified and perhaps caused by his unremarkable face and irresolute figure; even his fair mustache had an unimpressive droop. He was always described by negatives.

The refuge, however, was less desirable than Ingram had anticipated. As the Spanish proverb has it, "One may find a flea in the softest bed." The palm tickled his nose with a malignant pertinacity. He pushed aside the offending leaf irritably, and in doing so he saw Miss Sabina Clifton moving across the room. Her face was animated and her eyes sparkling with enjoyment. "Yes," she was saying to a little knot of admirers, "we are dreadfully late, but I've been all day at Henley." She was wearing a glowing dress of some Eastern rainbow-colored gauze, but it did not suck out her own brilliance. The whole assembly seemed to Ingram suddenly to sink into the right key dominated by the clear ring of this girl's voice and the vividness of her personality. "How lovely she looks," he thought, and he strolled towards her.

Sabina held out her hand as he approached, but did not otherwise notice him. She went on chatting gayly, but the other men gradually drifted away, impelled by bored relatives or the thought of inexorable last trains. "Dear me, this is the reward of unpunctuality," the girl cried as the room thinned. "I wish I were the astronomer royal and made the time; he does waste his opportunities, doesn't he?"

"Look, there's father," Sabina went on suddenly, pointing to a whitehaired, abstracted old gentleman who was deep in conversation with a younger man; "he's quite oblivious to the fact that if we stay much longer we'll be turned out with the electric light. Really, after

astronomers, I most envy historians, because they are always centuries slow, so a few hours one way or the other doesn't make the slightest difference to them."

Ingram's eyes obediently followed along the girl's outstretched finger, but he did not move. He knew Professor Clifton well, for he had studied under him at University College and had always kept up the old respectful intimacy. Just now, however, there were only two people in the world, himself and Sabina. He was overpowered by a feeling of her nearness and sick with bodily pain. It brought back examination days; "needle," he remembered the men used to call it, this unpleasant forerunner of a mental or physical test. "If you don't suggest a chair soon, I shall sit on the floor," laughed Sabina. "Henley may be nice, but it's rather exhausting, you know."

The chair was brought, then Ingram found another and sat down beside her. He was still silent, and had hardly apologized for his remissness. At last his companion said with a touch of hauteur, "If you ought to be going, please don't let me detain you."

"I'd like to stop here forever." Directly he had spoken, Ingram felt the words to be insufferably feeble. He wondered if any other man had opened a proposal in so lame a fashion.

Sabina had glanced at him quickly; probably she was struck by a certain tenseness in his tone. However, she only accepted the remark as a foolish compliment. "Well, I shouldn't," she answered lightly; "I should get hungry and sleepy and most appallingly cross." Her ready laugh was, however, a trifle forced.

Ingram was not to be put off. No one is so persistent as a shy man who has at last come to the point. Possibly he feels that he may never have the nerve to reach it again.

"You know what I mean," he said quietly. "Surely, Miss Clifton, you know what I mean?"

Sabina's expression changed suddenly. "Oh, don't, don't," she cried; "don't begin to make everything horrid and uncomfortable. Please, please, don't!"

- "I know that you don't care for me now." Ingram spoke steadily enough, but his face had paled a little. "I only want you to think about it—sometime, some day, perhaps?" his voice was appealing.

But Sabina shook her head. She was young enough to be remorseless. Pity is akin to love, for it is only when a girl loves one man that she can pity another. The proposal necessarily gave Sabina a certain gratification and pleasurable excitement, but towards the proposer she only felt resentful and a trifle contemptuous. She did not like being made to seem unkind, also she resented the hold that the mere fact of a man's unreturned affection gave him over her. And unconsciously she despised him, possibly because she was aware of her own short-

comings; had she loved him, it would have only made her humble. These things combined caused her to say sharply, "Don't you see, Mr. Ingram, how unsuited we are? You're so clever, and spend all your time at the office or the lawcourts, and hardly ever take any holidays. And I don't like anything but frivolous things, dancing and tennis and boating and hockey,—oh, I simply love any sort of game!"

Ingram looked grave. It was quite true that Sabina had all the modern girl's zest for athletics. Is it that women need to stretch their limbs, cramped by centuries of swaddling-bands? Unfortunately, he was particularly bad at all these things; still, he could get a Sandow exerciser, he reflected humorously. Elementary muscularity seemed as necessary now to gain a bride as in the days of the Romans.

"Oh, here comes father at last," Sabina remarked in a relieved tone. "Now, good-by. For the future we'll just be friends, and you'll quite stop thinking of this absurd idea."

"Eppur il nuovo," Ingram murmured as he watched the girl disappearing on her father's arm.

Although Sabina had not heard the last remark, she was foolish in the position that she assumed. She allowed and even encouraged Mr. Ingram to continue his frequent calls, but as he never definitely asked her permission, she told herself that she was not to blame. By constant self-assurance she nearly made herself believe that the relationship on both sides was now purely platonic, but in her heart she knew that it was the subtle atmosphere of controlled passion which gave it a pleasurable piquancy.

It was unfortunate that at this juncture the Professor innocently asked Ingram to stay at the little cottage in Surrey where he and his daughter usually spent their holidays. "I'm writing a monograph on Roman law," the old man had said, "and if you could spare the time to run through it with me, your knowledge of modern legal technicalities would be of great assistance. Indeed, if you could come and stay with us for a few days when we quit the turmoil of the metropolis, I should much enjoy the pleasure of your society apart from any selfish consideration." The Professor smiled pleasantly, for he was fond of his old pupil, although he had been disappointed that the brilliant college career had only been followed by a comparatively commonplace success as a solicitor.

"Oh, yes, do come to Dunsfold," echoed Sabina thoughtlessly. When she saw the expression on Mr. Ingram's face, she wondered uneasily whether she had done wrong. "Well, caveat visitor," she murmured at last, and with the misquoted legal tag dismissed the responsibility.

Mr. Ingram had already bought the Sandow exerciser, and now he practised with redoubled vigor. His biceps did not, however, swell at

the rate that he had anticipated, and when he went to Dunsfold he found that Sabina could still beat him easily at every game. Fortunately, she accepted his "new manhood" humorously and there were no other guests to emphasize his physical shortcomings. He hoped that she did not notice how absurdly exhausted any muscular effort left him.

One day she did remark upon it, and in a more sympathetic manner than he had expected. They were boating on the river, for Sabina had forbidden work with the Professor that morning as being "ungrateful towards the weather." Ingram had obeyed joyfully, although when Sabina told him to scull, he felt it was hardly a holiday. "I could do it fifty million times as well, only being a passenger wouldn't be good for your moral nature," she explained. Afterwards she looked at him curiously as he labored with the perverse oars. "Change places," she cried suddenly, "you do look awfully tired."

Ingram moved and took the lines. He was not much more successful in this capacity, for he promptly steered the boat into the bank. Sabina seemed hardly to notice it, however, or to hear his profuse apologies. "Why do you get so worn out?" she asked suddenly.

There was a pause, and then the girl went on speaking. "You know you work too much. Why do you slave every day and all day at your office, when you have plenty of money without? I think it's silly."

"So do I," Ingram agreed. "I suppose it's the nature of the animal. I've got so used to the feel of the shafts that I couldn't do without them. Besides, privately I'm rather proud of my harness. Perhaps though some day I sha'n't go to the office so much," he finished softly.

"Well, I suppose even now in the evenings you allow your poor clients a little relaxation?"

It was the first time that Sabina had shown any interest in his work or even in his life. Her own vitality was so overflowing that it seemed rather to swamp the confidences of others. Although she had spoken lightly, Ingram flushed with pleasure. "Most evenings I have my boys' club," he said shamefacedly,—"factory hands, you know. We have lectures and that sort of thing, games and dancing too sometimes, so you see I'm not so hopelessly educational. I must confess, though, I leave that department chiefly to the others."

"Why haven't you said anything about it before?" asked Sabina. "Go on, tell me more."

Ingram was surprised at her interest. He began entering into the details and telling her of the boys' lives and of his difficulties and trials. "What a lot you do," Sabina said at length. "And I don't seem to be any use for anything." Then she laughed. "I'm the little idle boy, you know, and I want you to promise me not to work quite so hard."

Ingram leaned forward. He did not know how to take her words, but at their lowest value they showed great friendliness. Should he risk it? His breath was coming fast. Suddenly he was jerked into the bottom of the boat. He felt that he sprawled there grotesquely.

"Oh, you're perfectly hopeless," Sabina cried. She was standing up, trying to push off the boat, which through Ingram's negligent steering had again run aground. Her lithe young figure silhouetted itself sharply against the sky, and the rising curves of her firm arms were visible through her muslin sleeves. "It isn't that I mind so much as long as there's no one here to see you," she gasped, as they began to grate along, "but it's so absolutely silly not to be able to do a single thing." The irritation in her tone was obvious.

At this moment they saw a man coming down the towpath. By the long, loose stride they recognized Professor Clifton. He had an envelope in his hand, which he waved cheerfully as he got nearer. "Oh, father's got a telegram," said Sabina, and rowed in to shore.

It was for Ingram, and as he read it he gave a gasp of annoyance. The want of muscularity in his speech had always been one of Sabina's grievances, although it was felt rather than realized. Probably had he sworn a little it would have relieved her. Instead he only said, "My partner's had a bicycling accident, so I must go up to town at once."

"How sad, just when you were learning to steer so beautifully," laughed Sabina. Ingram looked up quickly. He did not understand. She did not seem to care at all. He wondered how he could have thought of formally proposing. Perhaps his fall had come before his pride, shielding it from a further rebuff.

"You'll have to be quick to catch the twelve-thirty express," remarked Sabina.

II.

DURING the next few weeks Ingram had no time to think of Sabina Clifton, although he never stopped missing her. The illness of his partner threw the whole of the work on his shoulders, and it all seemed to be of an unusually arduous and wearisome character. Sometimes when Ingram woke in the morning it seemed to him impossible to face the prospect of another hot, never-ending day. When once the effort was made, however, and he had reached the office, he found it not so bad as in anticipation,—indeed, stopping work then loomed as the difficulty. Late at night he would still be there, poring over legal documents and too tired to rest.

The boys' club too needed extra attention, for the lads were unruly and the new secretary seemed a fool. This was Ingram's opinion, and he practically expressed it in a sudden access of anger at the discovery of some blunder. The plain speaking did not make things go more smoothly, as Ingram afterwards realized. These attacks of hopeless

and uncontrollable irritation were new to him. He used not to take life so hardly, he remembered, or be so oblivious to the humor of stupidity. What did it all mean?

One day the explanation came. There had been a stormy meeting at the club the night before, and Ingram took advantage of a spare hour between two appointments to go down and try to bring about a better understanding. He was walking along quickly, with the heat beating down from above and upward again from the blank, scorching pavement, when suddenly he stopped. His hands clutched vaguely in space and then he fell down. For the time the world had ceased to belong to him; he had passed into being merely an object in other people's consciousness.

As he lay there, although of no importance to himself, Ingram became an exciting entity to the policeman and the quickly gathering crowd. He was sufficiently real to the perspiring ambulance men and the interested hospital nurses. He entered into several doctors' lives, who examined him and pronounced it to be a case of paralytic seizure. Finally after some days he began to take possession of himself once more,—only to a certain extent, however, for his legs would always be dead. "But you'll soon get used to crutches, and there's no reason why, with care, you shouldn't live to a good old age," they told him cheerily.

Perhaps it was as well that Ingram struggled so slowly back into life, for the blow was dulled to him. He hardly seemed to grasp what they said, and lived merely through his senses. The first time he really asserted himself was when the doctors told him that they'd done all they could and were going to send him to live at some healthy place in the country. "I shall go back to my old flat in Lincoln's Inn Fields," he announced.

This he persisted in, notwithstanding medical disapproval. The doctors were still more horrified when they found that Ingram proposed living alone and merely having a woman by the day to wait on him. In any case the plan was foolish, for Ingram's rooms were on the third floor and the long descent made going out a serious difficulty. In spite of an acquired dexterity with the crutches, Ingram found it such an effort that he almost gave up outdoor exercises and let his servant, Mrs. Jones, execute his few commissions.

Perhaps Ingram would not so readily have resigned himself to this numb condition of hopeless apathy had Sabina shown any interest in his well-being. But during these long months he had had no word from her. "She might have said she was sorry, even if it were a lie," he thought cynically. At last he learned that her father, the kindly, vague old Professor, had died suddenly soon after his own attack. Sabina had gone abroad almost immediately afterwards with some relations, and so might easily not have heard of his condition. He was obliged to

mention it incidentally as an explanation of the delay in the letter of condolence that common politeness made him write.

"How she'd dislike me if she saw me now," he murmured as he closed the envelope.

He was surprised when by return of post he got a letter from Sabina asking if she might come and see him. She did not refer to his health, and her whole tone, though light, was kindly. "I shall be returning to London next month," she wrote, "and it would be nice to see an old friend again."

The rush of joy that Ingram felt warned him of the folly in such a meeting. "She's only offering to do it out of pity; besides, it's no good opening it all afresh when I'm literally out of the running." The reply he sent was churlish in its curt refusal of her courtesy.

The same supersensitive dread of inflicting himself on others through their charity caused him to discountenance all society. He had never been a man of many friends, and the few he possessed began to drop off when they found their visits were so grudgingly received. In any case the river of life would have carried them swiftly past the spot where he lay waterlogged. He could almost test, what everyone believes for others but discredits for himself, the incredibly short time that the water is ruffled when the craft has sunk to the silent, unknown bottom. Sometimes Ingram felt that he had been guilty of an impropriety in thus outliving his own funeral.

When the time came for Sabina's return to London Ingram found the days grew even more dreary and solitary. "It's absurd that her being in the same town should make the least difference," he told himself angrily. Perhaps, in spite of his letter, he had hoped that she would make further advances. For the first time he began to realize his loneliness. One evening, after having sharply dismissed Mrs. Jones, for her bustling presence irritated him, he found himself wishing that she might return. The blank futility of his life swept over him. He had begun work again; he was rubbing up the neglected classics, reading economics, learning to typewrite. But of what use was this centripetal labor? What good did he do to anyone? Perhaps he was even doing harm. He might be keeping some other man out of these very chambers, some young fellow pulsing with hope and life and love, who would fill the rooms with snatches of song and bursts of light-hearted laughter.

Suddenly, as he sat there, his eyes fell on the bottle of sleeping mixture that Mrs. Jones had put ready by his side. Sleep—yes, but sleep was for such a little while. Why should the time be so short? If you might sleep for twelve hours, why not for twelve days, for twelve years, for all eternity? With a curious remoteness Ingram began to think of Mrs. Jones, the only person to whom his death would be even

an inconvenience. Mrs. Jones would lose a good place; but then she was down for a legacy in his will. Even to Mrs. Jones it would be a charity.

At this moment there was a knock at the outer door. A handle had been arranged in the sitting-room beside Ingram's chair, by means of which he could let in visitors without laboriously hobbling down the passage. He pulled the knob in guilty haste, startled at being discovered with such thoughts. "I suppose Mrs. Jones has forgotten her key again," he muttered.

No sound of steps, however, followed the opening of the door. Ingram wondered if his imagination had played him a trick. "Of course, it's much too late for Mrs. Jones," he remembered. He guessed that someone must have knocked at the wrong door and then hurried away at discovering the mistake. "Most likely one of those girls in the flat above. I suppose, now, I must go and shut the door." He was preparing to get out of his chair when he smiled a little. "After all, the trouble would be rather unnecessary," he reflected. He slowly stretched out his hand towards the bottle of sleeping mixture.

Suddenly he stopped. He was conscious of a strange presence in the room. For a second, overpowered by a sudden fear, he dared not look round. "Yet it can't be more than death," he thought grimly. He turned his head and saw a tall, black figure in the doorway. As he looked the cloak was thrown back. Sabina was standing there,—Sabina, vivid and glowing, her eyes shining, her cheek flushed, her whole being radiant in the well-remembered rainbow gown.

"My God!" Ingram whispered. Then he realized the impossibility of the truth. He had not suffered from delusions before, but he supposed that this must be a new phase in his illness.

"Your porter is a very nice man. He didn't make any fuss; I believe, though, he mistook me for someone else; it was pretty dark," remarked the ghostly Sabina.

Ingram did not answer; indeed, he could not. The face of the visitant grew troubled. Then she laughed. It was the laugh of the old, real Sabina, and yet not quite the same. Indeed, some subtle softening seemed to have touched the whole figure, toning its brilliant definiteness. You would have almost said that the lips were trembling.

"I'm quite real," the apparition announced, coming forward with a convincingly feminine rustle of skirts and a trip of quick footfalls. A warm flesh-and-blood hand was laid on Ingram's arm. "Quite, quite real," the girl said.

"Sabina! Sabina!" Ingram had grasped her hand and was covering it with kisses. "Sabina! Sabina!" He could only repeat her name.

But Sabina drew herself away, and the action brought Ingram back

to realities. "How could you come here like this, at this hour; it must be midnight," he cried wildly. "What would your people say? What would anyone say?"

Sabina turned scarlet. "I thought it wouldn't matter, because you would marry me," she said.

"What!"

Suddenly Sabina hid her face. "Oh, I haven't made a mistake, an awful mistake! You do love me still. Say it; say it!"

Ingram tried to rise to his feet, forgetting for an instant his helplessness. The crutches fell down with a clatter. "Of course I do, Sabina," he said passionately. "I've always loved you, and now,—now it's all I have in life." But as Sabina dropped her hands and showed him her face, radiant once more and blushing with joy, he cursed himself for his folly. Were those the sort of words to bring her back to common-sense? Only he had felt that he could not bear to see her shamed.

There was a pause, then Ingram spoke again. "Sabina," he said, "it is because I love you that I am going to send you away. I cannot marry you now that I am crippled."

"It's just why you can," replied Sabina. "You really need me now. Besides, I think I prefer your not being able to do things to your doing them so badly."

The words were said laughingly to lighten the situation, and neither she nor Ingram realized their truth. He disregarded the remark altogether. "It's very noble of you, dear, to be so pitiful," he murmured, "but I cannot let you sacrifice yourself."

"I love you," said Sabina.

Ingram picked up his crutches and, leaning on them, dragged himself to his feet. It was heroic, although he did not know it. He took a few ungainly steps, his humped form more resembling some grotesque quadruped than a man. "Look at me well," he said bitterly. "Do you enjoy the spectacle?"

"I love you," said Sabina.

"It would not only be when we were alone," he went on pitilessly. "In the streets the people look at me and turn away, the children look at me and laugh,—even the dogs seem to look at me curiously. Is that the sort of husband you would be proud to walk with?"

"I love you," said Sabina.

Ingram sank down into the chair again; it was very hard.

"Oh Sabina," he almost groaned, "you don't understand. You don't understand, dear, that you'd be giving up everything. Your life would be empty. You'd miss the greatest joys in a woman's life."

"I'd have *you*," whispered Sabina.

Ingram shook his head. "I cannot let you do it."

"I don't think you can help it," Sabina said sweetly. She glanced at the clock.

The action recalled Ingram to the immediate necessity. "Go home! go home at once!" he cried; "they may not have missed you yet."

She sat down. "They won't miss me at all," she said, "because they think I'm staying with the friends where I dined. That's why I waited until to-night, six whole days, for this is the tenth and we came back on the fourth. By the second post to-morrow my cousin will get a letter from me telling her where I really am, but by then we'll be safely married."

Ingram felt as though the room were turning around him. "But, my dear child," he urged feebly, "it takes time even to get a special license."

"I have one," said Sabina.

"INGRAM—CLIFTON.—On the 11th instant, at St. Bride's, Fleet Street, by the Rev. R. E. Strong, John Ingram, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, to Sabina, only daughter of the late Professor Clifton, of University College."



TO EGYPT

BY ALICE WILSON

WHAT though we break with heedless light of day
On thy sepulchral rest so still, so vast,
And from the ruined treasury of thy past
As thieves we bear thy buried hoard away,
Mourn not, oh Egypt! Still thy vault is deep
With virgin wealth beyond our ruthless reach:
Thy wisdom, locked before our questioning speech,
Thy beauty, wrapped in its imperial sleep.

These keep as thine imperishable store,
Oh Hathor Egypt, till the world is done!
Nor grudge those things whose broken loveliness
Recalls us from the living throng and press,
To seek, upon thy venerable shore,
Their priceless rescue from oblivion.

THE ODYSSEY OF PISCATOR

By Henry Wysham Lanier



I.

WHEN a man has travelled a thousand miles to enjoy simultaneously the quest for a mighty salmon and for a girl's favor, it is not pleasant to capture the former unfairly and to have the girl run away. Piscator had spent two days by the river of which he had dreamed for years—off days for the fish; he had “jigged” one twenty-three-pound salmon—a dark secret of which he was heartily ashamed; and the Peri had suddenly fled from the scene—an open catastrophe, which was only prevented from being publicly humiliating to him by the rumor that her departure was due to the designs of silly Mrs. Simpkins upon the gallant General, her father.

There were, however, certain mitigating circumstances in the gloomy charge which Piscator was now summing up against Fate. To begin with, the Peri had seemed distinctly annoyed at certain imaginary relations between himself and Mrs. Simpkins,—entirely false conclusions which she had drawn from that unfortunate lady's manifest craving for adoration. Removed from the agitating influence of the Peri's presence and able to weigh the matter coolly, Piscator could not repress a hopeful pleasure at this phenomenon.

“She really must have cared—a little,” he assured himself.

Far more to the point was the manner of her going. For, as the train had actually moved away, she had apparently relented; smiling upon him from the car window, she had whispered,—

“We're going bass fishing.” Not a word more; not a hint of place or direction.

He could hardly help laughing at this now, though the joke was on himself. It was like a woman, and particularly like the Peri, to do it in that manner, to give him just this vaguest clue, to save her own dignity by advancing very much less than half way and making his part only a little less than impossible. He could imagine how her eyes would sparkle with gay and childlike delight at thought of this game of hide-and-seek; and since there was no one of her changing moods which was more fascinating than this fresh, light-hearted mirth, Piscator's angling enthusiasm promptly underwent a “sea change.”

“A black bass in the air is worth a dozen salmon on the river bot-

tom," he asserted stoutly to one of the Enthusiasts who, in a purely missionary spirit, had felt called to labor with this faint-hearted and backsliding brother upon hearing his recantation and change of plan. But the good old gentleman was so deeply shocked at this almost blasphemous utterance that Piscator had to qualify it hastily and retire.

He read Henshall from beginning to end again and then dived into a wilderness of guide-books, emerging, as might have been expected, with no clearer plan of campaign than when he began. Finally, he decided to start out anyhow; he would track them if he had to ask everyone he met.

So he tossed his duffle together and met the one south-bound train next day. All the men at Gardiner's insisted on seeing him off, though he hardly knew them apart; and he did not understand this sudden friendliness until the facetious Doctor began to load him down with messages—for the General.

"All right; I'll tell him if I happen to run across him," said Piscator, trying to face the thing out.

"Yes, if you happen to," echoed the Doctor. "Those coincidences do come about sometimes."

Piscator fled aboard from the open grins that broke out all around him.

"And say, old man," called the Doctor, "tell the General that Mrs. Simpkins—says he—has a—very—impulsive—temperament."

The car rolled away with the shouts of laughter still ringing in Piscator's ears, while the Doctor returned to Gardiner's to argue with a fellow-conspirator in Mrs. Simpkins's presence Piscator's qualifications as a "stepson-in-law."

II.

ABOUT noon of the following day Piscator descended from the train at the Junction, stretched himself, and sought the customs officer. In the middle of the night he had remembered hearing the General one evening rhapsodize upon the delights of a bass lake controlled by a fishing-club—the Nebo Club, yes, that was it—to which an old homœopathic doctor of his acquaintance in Bangor belonged. The General was almost as zealous a disciple of Hahnemann as of Izaak Walton, and a fat black-leather medicine-case, stuffed with a bewildering array of tiny bottles, occupied a prominent place in his fishing kit. He was as apt to spend the evening with this stretched out before him, studying his book of symptoms and applying the proper triturate or tincture, as to overhaul his reels or flies or leaders.

Piscator had been exceedingly bored and restless that evening over having to follow the old warrior's account of this famous trip by himself and his friend behind their twin hobbies, while the Peri sat out in

the starlight with Grafton, the red-faced Englishman; but the recollection was illuminating and left him flushed with excitement. Of course, that was where they had gone: what a fool he had been not to think of it before; his satisfied brain had presently given in to the demands of his tired body, and he had fallen asleep to the rhythmic refrain of the car-wheels, "Ne-bo, Ne-bo, Ne-bo."

So now he was about to strike down into Maine, and was already picturing with glee the Peri's surprise when he should appear so promptly. The General would probably be difficult, for this would be past a coincidence; but, well, if things went right with her, he could face the old martinet or anybody else. "I'll agree to turn homoeopathist if he gives his consent," he thought, and laughed aloud in sheer lightness of heart.

Presently appeared the customs official, a little, stout man oppressed with his uniform and responsibilities, who took him inside with the manner of Justice herself descending upon an escaping malefactor. Piscator answered his searching catechism satisfactorily, and all went smoothly until he struck the big bundle containing the English rods which Piscator had in his enthusiasm imported for this special occasion, two of them never used, and all looking most suspiciously new.

"These are all your own?" The inspector's face was stern. He dipped his pen in the ink, prepared to note down the exact answer on a formidable official card.

"Yes, I took them up three days ago."

"Do you generally use two new ones each day?"

Piscator flushed and was about to make a sharp retort; but it had just occurred to him that the man could doubtless tell him if the Peri actually had branched off here the day before. It would be absurd to get him angry and miss this chance by losing his temper. So he answered mildly,—

"I was expecting to stay two weeks, but cut my trip short."

The inspector had noticed his hesitation. He pulled out the three immaculate cases.

"These are English made—just out of the shop," said he triumphantly.

By an effort Piscator refrained from this golden chance to let red tape strangle itself.

"I imported them to New York a few weeks ago," he replied. "By chance I have the bill and customs receipt."

He expected the man to show apologetic humiliation for his mistake. Instead his attitude was merely one of increased vigilance. He carefully scrutinized the papers, made a note of them, and returned to his examination with an air that said as plainly as words, "You are a clever villain, but you cannot escape me next time."

Nothing else rewarded his zeal till he reached the last piece of baggage, a big portmanteau. Rummaging around among a lot of clothes, his hand struck a pile of tins. He pounced upon these and in the twinkling of an eye had spread out half a dozen cans of potted woodcock and other such titillating delicacies, which Piscator, remembering the Peri's whimsies of appetite, had thoughtfully purchased before starting.

Words were unnecessary: the inspector's condemnatory look asked for an explanation merely as a judge before sentencing goes through the formality of allowing the prisoner to speak in his behalf.

"I paid duty on those when I crossed before," said Piscator.

"Perhaps you have a receipt for that too," observed the officer sarcastically.

"No, I haven't."

The inspector consulted a huge printed schedule. "Two dollars," he announced.

"Why, that's almost as much as they cost," began Piscator indignantly. Then his better judgment came to his aid. Not too willingly, but like a determined man submitting only to overwhelming odds, he paid the duty. Wisdom was speedily justified of her child; the little bureaucrat was so delighted at his triumph that he became polite, condescending, consolatory. In a misguided moment Piscator offered him a cigar.

"I don't smoke," said the man, in such a tone that Piscator gave up the whole attempt in disgust and walked away, fearing that in a moment he would be examined for smuggled tobacco.

He decided to follow his instinct and bought a ticket for Bangor. Then he set in to kill the time by smoking, watched them making up the train which loafed across to the other main line semi-occasionally, and saw that all his baggage was safely on board.

It was now two o'clock, and he had had nothing to eat since an early breakfast. The idea of a lunch to fill up the remaining hours before his train started began to assume more and more insistent definiteness. The ticket agent assured him, however, that there was no chance of getting a meal at the Junction. "He and I"—nodding up the platform—"have the only house anywhere within five miles, and we had dinner hours ago."

"Well, I suppose that means crackers and whiskey sauce for me," said Piscator. "Can I get a glass and some water?"

"I'm sorry," replied the other, "but nobody hardly ever comes to this forsaken place. I haven't even got a water-cooler. He can give it to you, though."

"Not much! I'd rather go without!" exclaimed Piscator. He got out his shredded-wheat biscuits and began to munch away cheerfully.

By the time he had taken three bites a suspicion began to grow upon him that something was lacking. The dry, fibrous shreds stuck in his throat and fairly refused to go down. "Straight" whiskey was a dose to him, and he had never been able to forget a description by a doctor friend of the effect of this upon the "coats" of the inner man; so at last he reluctantly went back along the platform to the customs officer's little box of a house. That worthy met him with a scowl, which deepened at the request for a glass of water.

Piscator had not intended to explain, fearing he might prejudice his case still further with a curmudgeon who didn't smoke; but at this surliness he pulled the flask from his pocket. "The fact is," said he apologetically, "that I'm half starved and I'm trying to make out a lunch. Shredded wheat's pretty dry."

His eyes opened in wonder. Something seemed to have happened to the officer. He walked briskly to the corner, opened a cupboard, and came back smiling, setting down on the table a pitcher of water—and *two* glasses. Then he went to the door, stuck his head out for a moment, and closed it carefully.

"That fellow'd be up here in a minute," said he somewhat shamefacedly.

"Call him in," said Piscator hospitably. "There's lots here."

"No," rejoined the officer, eying the corpulent flask judicially. "It might get him into trouble: telegrams and train orders and that sort of thing, you know."

"All right; help yourself."

"Allow me." The man was transformed, Piscator thought, as his own moderate wants were first attended to. However, there seemed a certain method in this politeness. The officer tasted his own tumblerful, smacked his lips, and tossed it off. It did not take much urging on Piscator's part to induce him to repeat the operation. In fifteen minutes the flask was empty, and I grieve to state that the Official Representative of a Mighty Government was—quite the opposite. The only external result was an increase of dignity; within, matters were not so simple.

"By the way," said Piscator carelessly, "I believe some travellers passed through here ahead of me yesterday—an elderly gentleman and his daughter?"

"Elderly—daughter?" queried the officer rather thickly.

Piscator flushed and looked searchingly upon him, but there was no trace of anything save a striving to comprehend under difficulties.

"No," he said, "quite a young lady, with her father."

"You shaid elderly affirst," insisted the man.

"The father was elderly. Did you notice them?"

"Le' me shee." The officer put a finger to the side of his nose and looked contemplative.

"Yesherdag," said he vaguely. "Yesherdag was Friday."

"Come, now," replied Piscator, "you must remember. A girl with yellow hair in a gray dress and a stout gentleman with rather a red face."

"You can give all the detailsh?" The officer drew up a pile of elaborate printed forms—immigration blanks, Piscator saw they were. "Now," said he pompously. "Sex, lady. Color—you shay yellow?" He looked knowing, yet inwardly puzzled. "Tha's not right."

Piscator's reply was interrupted by the whistle of a train on the main track. He looked despairingly at the fuddled creature, and then, with a new idea, dashed out the door and down the platform to the ticket office as the Montreal express came thundering in.

"Say," he called breathlessly to the man behind the cage, "do you remember selling tickets yesterday to a gentleman and his daughter who came in on the same train I was on to-day?"

"Sure, I remember the daughter all right," answered the agent, with a wink.

"Where did they go?"

"Montreal."

"Great Scott! Give me a ticket there, quick!"

"Hey, there, here's your change," shouted the agent. "If he ain't gone without it," he continued aloud. "An' he'd got a ticket to Bangor—and, by cripes, all his trunks's on the Bangor train." He whistled long and loud. Then, remembering, "Well, I don't know as I blame him so much," he soliloquized.

III.

It was eleven at night when Piscator reached Montreal. He went straight to the Windsor and interviewed the clerk.

"Left this morning," said that autocrat curtly, after referring to his book.

Piscator groaned. "Where were they going?"

"Don't know, sir. No address left." He turned away. "Yes, Madam, what is it?"

"See here," insisted Piscator, "I've got to find out where they went."

"Sorry, sir," said the clerk, like one humoring an importunate child, "but—oh, beg pardon. Well, yes, sir. I'll see, sir. Possibly the porter who checked the trunks might recollect, sir."

In five minutes Piscator knew that the Peri and her father had started for Boston on the ten-o'clock train that morning and that he could just catch the midnight express in the same direction. He stuffed some sandwiches into his pockets, jumped into a cab, and stepped on board as the train pulled out. The berths were all taken

so he sat up in a grimy day car, dozing off at intervals, but unable to get into a comfortable position the whole dreary night. Never in his life was he more relieved to see the day than when he was finally aroused by a pink streak over the Massachusetts hills beyond the Hudson; and he reached Boston at eleven o'clock, weary, haggard, and forlorn.

Then began a disheartening round of the hotels. He had wasted two hours and had almost given up, when he found the names he sought in a register.

"Just left. No address," said the clerk. "I heard the gentleman say he was going to Maine fishing, but he decided to check his trunks at the station."

"What train were they to take?"

"Let me see; the one-ten I think they had to catch. Yes, that was it, the one-ten, Western Division."

Piscator looked at his watch: it was eleven minutes past one. Restraining a desire to break something, he set his teeth and consulted a time-table, indecision visible in his whole attitude.

Finally, "I'll have lunch," he announced. "And then I want to sleep a few hours. Give me a quiet room and wake me so I can catch the eight-o'clock from the North Union. Meanwhile, please have them reserve a lower berth on that train to Bangor for me."

At seven he struggled out from a deep sleep in response to a thunderous performance on his door, snatched a bite to eat, and caught the evening express, northward once more.

Refreshed and encouraged by a night's sleep, he descended at Bangor in the small hours of the morning, claimed his trunks, and after a leisurely breakfast looked up the General's doctor friend.

He had a suspicion during the interview that the Doctor was trying hard not to be openly amused; but this was lost sight of in the larger trouble of learning that he had not seen or heard of the General for a year, and could give no clue to his whereabouts.

This was rather a facer for Piscator, since it left him practically the whole State of Maine as a hunting-ground; but he kept his nerve outwardly, thanked the Doctor, apologized once more for bothering him, and went to a hotel to smoke out a plan of action.

After working over this problem till his head ached, he was forced to admit that he was temporarily beaten; but he had no thought of giving up. He telegraphed to his partner in New York arranging to add on to this vacation the three or four weeks which he had reserved for a snowshoe trip in the fall after New Brunswick moose; then he tossed a quarter to decide whether he should first work north or south from Bangor.

The coin fell head up, and he set out on a systematic canvass of every accessible bass lake on the Washington County Railroad. It took

him four days to cover the ground from Tunk Pond to Meddybemps and Pocomoonshine; but, though there was always the possibility of the General's having struck inland on a camping trip, he felt fairly well satisfied when he reached the latter lake that they had not come into this region. He became marvellously expert at making acquaintances. Then, leading the talk to fishing, he would presently instance the General's name in some connection. By such devices and visiting every camp, boarding-house, and hotel, he carried on the disheartening search. It was trying work: even the bass he caught between-times did not possess a natural zest for him. Probably for this reason his luck was phenomenal, and he left new records behind him for size and number in more than one place.

From Princeton he went up the St. Croix to Vanceboro and made his way down from Tomah and Baskahegan to Lake Peqnaunemenapsakasassanagnog; from there he drove to Moluncus, swung around through Mattawamkeag and Passadumkeag, and finally found himself back in Bangor. This whole circuit took ten days, and while he learned much about the black bass and how to capture him, he had to admit that he was just as wise as when he started concerning the object of his search.

After this futile round Piscator set forth blindly, and the record of his wanderings is a difficult one to chronicle. Names seemed to have little meaning for him after the first shock of Peqnaunemenapsakasassanagnog, but he retained a few in his memory without knowing where they were; he went wherever the day's fancy dictated, thinking this as good a plan as any. From Nollsemic and Pemadumcook he journeyed to Umquoleus; then across country to Matagamon, Telos, and Caucomyomoc; here he struck a railroad again and turned south past Chesuncook and Nahmakanta to Moosehead and civilization. Another stretch past Carritunk, past Bingham, and past Norridgewock brought him to Belgrade. He remembered Belgrade. First of all, the bass fishing that year was not of a sort to be forgotten; and then there was a Girl there.

IV.

PROBABLY there were girls at some of the other places—a man cannot escape from them nowadays even in the wilderness, not even if he wished (which Heaven forbid!). But Piscator's mind was already so full of femininity that these maidens, charming though they doubtless were, made no definite impression upon him save that of disappointment. He was looking for another, when it came to that. But Miss Davies appealed to a different side. She was not an abnormality, like the woman he had run across in the wilds of the Allagash region, camping out with a pair of guides as attendants, whose only evidences of sex were a short skirt and a tendency to boast of having done things

a woman is, very properly, supposed not to do; indeed, she was not like any woman he had known. He set it down partly to the fact that she was English, or Canadian, or something of that sort. Whatever the cause, however, the fact was plain that she was a true sportsman—and that is an incarnation seldom assumed by protean woman.

His attention was first attracted as he was casting at sunrise the morning he arrived by noticing her starting out alone in a canoe. He had ideas himself concerning guides, and never took one when he could help it, so this evidence of independence appealed to him. She made no parade about it; she simply allowed the members of her party—a sister and a brother-in-law, he fancied—to go their own way, while she went hers—apparently from very love of the sport and of doing everything for herself. He had a theory that a woman, like a Frenchman, never really enjoyed doing anything alone; and, possessing a solitary tendency in his own temperament, his curiosity and sympathy alike were piqued at this apparent contradiction. That evening, when he returned to the hotel, he found she had caught twice as many fish as himself—and he thought about her a good deal.

He went out early again next morning, deciding to have another try before his train left. When he reached the little wharf he found Miss Davies there, pulling at her canoe in order to empty out the water. Coming from south of Mason's and Dixon's line, Piscator could not stand by and see this. She allowed him to do the work for her quite naturally, with no protest or self-consciousness, and presently paddled off with a matter-of-fact "thank you" that closed the incident.

Piscator rowed away in the opposite direction and soon forgot her in the absorption of fishing. There was rather a brisk northwest breeze, which kicked up a choppy head sea and made it difficult to handle the boat and cast. After fighting against this for some time and raising nothing in a dozen likely coves where he had struck fish right along the day before, he rowed across the lake and drifted down the opposite shore. It was much easier here, but the bass seemed to be off their feed, and for two hours his hard work failed of any result. He discarded his flies and cast a spoon; then he caught a frog and skittered him among the weeds; a couple of live minnows were used up next; and, everything proving of no avail, he was contemplating the humiliating alternative of still-fishing in the deep water, when he rounded a long, wooded point and came upon Miss Davies.

"Well, any luck?" she asked in a business-like way.

"Not a rise."

"Where have you been?"

"I started up the other shore," explained Piscator carefully, "but the wind was so strong there that I crossed and came down. Have you struck anything?"

"No, I haven't,—the first time since I've been here," said the girl. "But we're not in the right place for to-day. Beyond the island there there's a stretch of shallow water with sandbanks, and I think you'd have more chance."

"Thank you very much," said Piscator, looking down the lake and picking up his oars.

"I was thinking of trying it myself," continued the girl. "If you want to come, I'll show you."

He would have been embarrassed at this with anybody else, but there was nothing personal whatever in her attitude. She was interested in the problem of finding bass; she accepted as obvious the fact that she knew more about the place than he did; and she was perfectly willing to initiate him—that was all there was to it. He rowed along beside her thinking this over and admiring the ease with which she handled the paddle. He was surprised to find himself more interested in her evident determination not to be outwitted by the fish than he was in the sport itself. This seemed so ludicrously unnatural that he involuntarily braced up and pulled harder at the oars. She kept pace without difficulty, and in a few minutes they were past the island and drifting along beside a stretch of rushes beyond.

Miss Davies began to cast a small spoon towards shore, handling her four-ounce lancewood rod with entire ease and command. Piscator's boat was on the outside, slightly behind the canoe, making it awkward for him to cast. She noticed this in a moment.

"Why don't you fish?" she demanded.

"I will, presently. Let's see if you can raise one first."

"No—that isn't right at all."

He thought she glanced at the other end of the canoe, and this emboldened him.

"Better combine forces and let me row you along here," said he. "We can manage it better that way."

He never knew what answer she was about to make, for at that moment there was a great *wallop* in the water near the rushes, and with an exclamation the girl threw the tip of the little rod far back behind her.

"You've got him," cried Piscator,—"*a grandfather!*"

Up into the air came a five-pound small-mouth, shaking his head like a terrier with a rat. The hook held tight and the girl expertly canted him over. She sat up straight, her eyes shining, her teeth clinched, and gave the big fish the strain of the rod, while with the left hand she stripped the line or released it in accord with his rushes. He leaped again, and the reel screeched as he dashed about hither and thither. At the end of a few minutes Miss Davies half turned her head.

"He's too big for me," said she. "I wish you'd take the rod."

"I wouldn't think of such a thing," declared Piscator. "Go ahead: he's a record-breaker and you're handling him like a professional."

"I wouldn't let you ordinarily," she replied coolly, "but I hit my side with the reel when I struck him and it tires me."

"What—are you hurt?" asked Piscator anxiously.

"It's nothing at all," she answered with some impatience. "I merely bruised a muscle slightly and it isn't comfortable to fight such a lively fish. Please take it: I don't want to lose him."

Piscator pulled his boat up alongside, between her and the fish, and she passed the rod over to him. As he grasped the stripped line above where she held it the fish gave a jerk and his hand touched hers; but she paid no attention to this, and carefully freed the loose line which was coiled in the bottom of the canoe. He had barely begun to put a strain on when the bass seemed to make up his mind to seek deep water and darted straight at the boat. It was impossible to carry the line around the bow, since the canoe was in the way. Piscator jumped to his feet, stepped hastily over the middle seat, and swung the tip of the doubled-up rod out beyond the stern, while the big fish passed underneath at railroad speed. He was just congratulating himself upon the success of this difficult manoeuvre when, taking another step to get straight, his left foot was tripped by a coil of the loose line; he bent quickly and pushed it free, but in doing so lost his balance, stumbled against the stern seat, and sat down heavily on the thwart,—with the natural result of tumbling backward overboard.

He was always proud to remember that he kept his wits at this trying moment. As he settled down into the water, he threw the tip of the rod around sideways; before he knew what was happening, he was standing on the bottom up to his shoulders, with Miss Davies gripping his collar from the canoe.

"I'm all right," he gasped, spluttering and much ashamed of himself. "It's not over my head."

She let go immediately. "I think," said she in a voice which shook a little, in spite of herself, "you've still got the fish."

This was too much for Piscator. He burst into a roar of laughter, which brought a faint color to her cheeks.

"I beg your pardon," he said presently, "but it was too much—by Jove! he is on there yet;" and in a few minutes more the big bass, apparently disheartened by such disregard of the rules of war, was floundering in Miss Davies's net.

"Well," said Piscator a little later, standing on shore while his clothes made a miniature lake at his feet, and holding up the bass on a pocket scales, "you're high hook for this season."

"I," repeated Miss Davies scornfully. "It's your fish, not mine."

"Nonsense! You hooked him and you could have landed him just as well as not."

"What I could have done is not the point," she retorted. "You did land him, and he belongs to you."

He laughed. "We'll form a partnership to take him over—'The Indomitable Bass Company, Limited.' Do you feel like a champion—or half a champion?"

"I feel you're going to catch your death of cold unless you go straight home."

"I think I will retire temporarily from active work in the concern," said Piscator, dropping the fish into the canoe.

She made no reply, so he bailed out the boat in rather an awkward silence and rowed rapidly back to the wharf, watching Miss Davies, who was casting in a somewhat desultory fashion. As he climbed the hill to the hotel he looked back and saw her paddling in.

Piscator sneaked up to his room, got into dry clothes, and came down to breakfast feeling distinctly exhilarated. Everybody was talking of Miss Davies's monster fish, but he heard no mention of his own exploit. He was relieved at this, yet it made him somewhat thoughtful. After finishing the meal he sat down to write a hurried note to his partner in New York, who would probably think he was crazy, for he was again lengthening his trip by two weeks. He added a request to have some money sent him at Belgrade. "I may be here a few days longer," the letter ran. "Since landing a five-pounder before breakfast I hate to leave. But I shall move on again soon."

At the dock he saw Miss Davies's canoe still beached. He sat down deliberately and lit a pipe. Before it was finished she appeared over the hill. He had transferred her belongings to his boat, and now without a word he held it ready. She stepped in as if as a matter of course, he took his seat facing her, and they rowed away.

The next day was a repetition of this, and the next. There was no arrangement between them: they seemed to understand each other without speaking, and each tacitly accepted the fact that they were to spend the days together. They did not talk much,—she would sit for an hour without saying anything; but while they fished assiduously and most of the conversation was on this subject, there was something, a sense of companionship, which was no less plain and was more subtly attractive for being unexpressed.

About the fourth day she and her party left for Maranacook. Piscator went down to the station with her, sorely perturbed in mind. Miss Davies had not by word or look intimated that she expected him to follow; but he could not determine whether his concern was because he knew she did expect it and wasn't sure if he wanted to, or because he wanted to and wasn't sure if she would be willing.

The Odyssey of Piscator

They stood together on the platform waiting for the local.

"Don't fall overboard in a deep spot," said Miss Davies suddenly.

Piscator looked at her. "It is a risk," said he slowly, "without having you near by."

"Ethel, Ethel," called the married sister to Miss Davies. "Stand back farther. Here comes the express."

Looking up, they saw the train shoot around the curve and speed towards the station. They stepped back to the wall, and the engine with its long line of coaches and sleeping-cars roared past in a horizontal vortex of smoke and cinders.

"What I've been trying to figure out," said Piscator in the girl's ear, "is whether it would be more dangerous——"

He broke off short and repressed an ejaculation, staring hard at the "Eleusis" as it rolled by.

The girl made no comment on his abruptness. "Here's our train," said she. "Good-by."

"Good-by," said Piscator awkwardly. He helped them on and stood on the platform as the train pulled out. Miss Davies looked back from the window, but he could not read her expression.

He waited for an instant, then turned on his heel and went to the ticket office.

"Where does that express stop first?"

"Number twenty-three?"

"The one that just went down; I don't know the number."

"First stop is Portland."

"Portland, eh? Give me a ticket there. How soon can I get to Portland now?"

"Twenty-two minutes."

Half an hour later he had notified the hotel people by telephone that the amount of his bill would be deposited with the ticket agent, they had agreed to forward his trunk and baggage to Boston next day, and his quest had begun again.

This time it was more exciting than ever before,—for he had seen the Peri's face in the window of the "Eleusis." Whether she had recognized him or not he could not tell.

V.

THE train stopped ten minutes at Portland. Piscator jumped off before it came to a standstill and rushed up to the gatekeeper.

"Were you here when twenty-three came in?" he asked.

"Sure," responded that functionary wonderingly.

Piscator pressed a couple of cigars into his hand. "I want to know if you noticed a lady with yellow hair and a stout gentleman."

"Stylish-looking girl who looked as if she owned the town?"

"Yes, I guess so. With an elderly man with a gray mustache and rather a red face."

"Well, now, you're in luck," said the man familiarly. "They went down there to the restaurant: I didn't lose sight of *her* till I had to."

Piscator made his way to the dining-room.

"Yes," said the lady cashier just a trifle snappishly. "Had on a hat with a white feather? Yes, they was here, I should think they was. Thought we was going to have a famine and drought before they was through. They ain't been gone three minutes; turned down Main Street, they did."

Piscator went out into the street on a run. There were but few people in sight, and he had not gone three blocks when he saw two figures that made his heart leap for an instant. The lady had a hat with a white feather above a pile of yellow hair, and was rather taller than her male companion.

He quickened his pace; but as he drew nearer he began to feel a trifle uneasy. When he was half a block away the pair turned and walked back towards him. The chemical looking blonde gave a loud laugh at some sally of the little Jew beside her, and Piscator passed them with his head in a whirl and his cheeks flushing red. The humor of the thing did not appeal to him for a block and a half: then he remembered the guard's expression and thought of the Peri's aristocratic profile. He laughed aloud.

"Seems to me," said a voice behind him, "that you're in a mighty good-humor for a feller as isn't fishing."

He turned to see the honest face of his old guide, Jim, who seized his hand in a bear-like paw and gripped it hard. "Been a-chasing you a full block," said Jim. "My lord, you do mosey when you git started! Now you're going to jump right into that buggy with me and drive out where I'll show you some fishing as is fishing."

Piscator tried to protest, but the old fellow cut him short.

"Now, see here," said he, "did I used to know what you liked?"

Piscator had to admit it.

"Waal, I ain't forgot your likes or liquors," and Jim rumbled away in the depths of his chest. The old man's heart was so set on the expedition that Piscator could not bear to disappoint him; moreover, the Peri had escaped him again, so what did it matter, anyhow?

That night he fell asleep in Jim's camp on the wooded shore of a lonely lake only twenty miles from the city, but as yet almost untouched by the tourist or summer visitor.

"There's one or two farmhouses over yonder that takes boarders this year," explained Jim, "and some rich folks from Boston has put up a real picture house beyond Wildcat Creek; but if you want to take a swim in the morning, you needn't be afraid of company. And

The Odyssey of Piscator

as for fish—well, there's a rack full of rods, and I'll show you some fish."

Piscator woke at daybreak and, without disturbing Jim, went out for the suggested swim. The tonic effects of this and the sight of the beautiful, still lake made him decide to surprise the old man. Picking out a rod and a fly-book, he stepped into a canoe and paddled slowly out into the gray morning light.

He made no attempt to fish for some time, but went a mile or so up the lake, enjoying the freshness and the sight of the clean, pebbly beaches, from which the white stems and pale-green leaves of the young birch-trees shaded off into the deep greens and rusty browns of the tall spruces that overtopped everything else. Crossing to the opposite shore, he saw off to the left one of the farmhouses Jim had spoken of.

"That arm must lead to his famous Little Basin," thought he, paddling towards an opening in the trees ahead. In a few minutes he had passed through the narrow outlet and his canoe shot into a round pool perhaps two hundred yards across, formed by a curving promontory. It was land-locked save at the place he had entered, where a stream not fifteen feet wide joined it with the main lake. The shores sloped gently up on each side, thickly lined with evergreens and hard wood; the Little Basin lay placid in the growing morning light, its dark water reflecting the bodies of the trees, a thing set apart, unique, perfect.

His angler's instinct presently asserted itself. Rigging up a red ibis and a Parmacheene belle, he began to cast ahead as the canoe drifted noiselessly along the shore. Hardly had the flies touched the water when there was a *plop* and a splash and a sudden strain on the rod. In a few minutes he was scooping a game two-pound black bass out of the water.

He had not gone fifty feet after landing this fish when he was fast again, this time to a pair who gave him a merry fight before they succumbed. So it went for over an hour, the "hottest corner" of bass he ever remembered, and when the Little Basin was finally so stirred up that the fish would no longer rise, he had thirteen to his credit, besides half a dozen "strikes" that came to naught.

The sun was just rising over the straggling trees on the eastern hill when he gave over and paddled towards the outlet, stopping now and then to enjoy the beauty of the scene.

Rounding a clump of bushes, he saw a figure standing in the path he had noticed on shore just beyond the opening. Some instinct made him paddle softly forward.

The Peri gave a little scream and looked around apprehensively as the level sun threw the shadow of a man across the path in front of her. She gazed at him incredulously, as if not trusting her eyes.

"I'm going to pinch myself," said she gravely.

"Didn't you know I would come?" asked Piscator.

"That sounds like him," said the Peri to the pine-tree. "He was always a great hand at pretending. But, of course, it isn't really he. How could he get here?"

Piscator jumped ashore and strode up the bank. "What difference does it make how I got here?" he asked. "I have no interest in the past." (He had rather a twinge of conscience at this, but he cared too much to take any chances now.) "I care for nothing in the world except—the present."

"And now," said the Peri some minutes later, deftly rearranging her Tam-o'-Shanter cap, "I'm waiting to hear who that was with you on the Belgrade platform."



A MAINE ROAD

BY GERTRUDE BUCK

A GLINT of birches in the dusky pines,
The sudden scent of balsam and sweet fern,
Long, starry plumes of wild blackberry vines,
A flash of ocean at the roadway's turn.



BEAUTY IN EXILE

BY ARTHUR CHAMBERLAIN

"THE great, glad times of art and song are dead."
So those who know have echoed in our ears:
"Men worship gold; the unimpassioned years
Are filled with little aims; the need of bread
Couples with sordid greed; and Beauty, fled,
No longer in our daily round appears.
Men cling to lesser hopes, hold baser fears
Than those that stirred the souls whom Beauty led."

So be it! Those who worship at Her shrine,
Though scant the sacrifice and low the flame,
May serve Her still in humble ministries;
So that, when once again in might divine
She comes unto Her own with wide acclaim:
"Faithful in exile," She shall say, "were these."

JACKY

By Agnes Louise Provost



FOR the first time in many moons Jacky was not in the guard-house nor on his way there. Jacky was so frequently in the guard-house that it was a cause for regimental comment when he was not.

As a Sioux gentleman of distinguished lineage and sanguine achievements in battle, Jacky bore the title of Red Buffalo. On the rolls of his regiment he was also entered as John Williams, private, Troop C, Fifty-Ninth Regiment. For common, every-day use, they dubbed him Jacky.

This morning he shambled across the parade quite undisturbed by the already scorching heat. He was very ugly and gaunt and surly looking, and his uniform fit him as though it had been shot at him and had landed by a lucky chance. As a specimen of the majestic dignity of the noble savage, Jacky was a depressing disappointment. As a representative unit of the United States army, he was a cause for tears. Be it said with all charity, Jacky on a reservation was bad enough, but Jacky in the garrison was a hopeless, worthless, utterly incorrigible nuisance.

"There comes that confounded Indian," growled Ewalds, the surgeon, who was sprawled comfortably on Colonel Paxton's veranda smoking a huge cigar and swearing in a rumbling monotone at the heat. It was a bad morning indeed which did not find Paxton and Ewalds hobnobbing over their cigars.

"I suppose he's coming to see me," responded Paxton in a drowsily contented tone. "Jacky's term of service has expired, you know, and as his character was not considered sufficiently glittering for reënlistment, he leaves us to-day with that wiry little cayuse of his. I'll see that he leaves sober, anyway. He won't be within gunshot of whiskey before night, and he won't take any out from here with him if I can help it."

Ewalds surveyed the unprepossessing Jacky with critical eye.

"I don't believe Jacky knows what to make of himself when he is sober. He must be in a hurry to leave us. This weather is enough to kill a buzzard, and no one but a whiskey-preserved Indian would think of starting across these God-forsaken plains in the middle of the morning. Gad, I'm glad we're not on the march, although it would be just

like those wrong-headed Apaches to start out on a frolic at a time like this. They've been restless for a month."

Ewalds mopped his forehead and then grinned slowly. The vision of Jacky sizzling under that scorching sun afforded him deep satisfaction. He did not like Jacky.

"The Sioux gentleman wants to bid you an affectionate farewell, Colonel. Shall I turn my back?"

Jacky paused at the veranda steps and saluted with a bad grace. He considered these everlasting military salutes beneath the dignity of a Sioux warrior whose fathers had been mighty chieftains, and had made the great Southwest so exceedingly uncomfortable for the white settlers. To be sure, he was out of the service now, but that reluctant salute was a habit which could not quickly be shaken off.

He felt quite sulky about leaving too. He liked the power and importance attached to the military post, and the uniform with its glittering buttons. Even the guard-house was not so bad a place in which to pass the night, and in the service he at least got an occasional taste of fighting. Next to whiskey, there was nothing on earth so dear to Jacky's heathen soul as a hard battle.

Colonel Paxton took him into the cottage. Ewalds could hear the Colonel's rumbling tones, trying to impress a wholesome tonic of lecture on the incorrigible who was leaving. He could imagine the unmoved stolidity with which it was received, and he grinned again.

Paxton came out looking warm and irritated, but there was a gleam of satisfaction in his eye as he watched Jacky shuffling sulkily off.

"I think I've fixed him to go straight, anyway," he remarked grimly. "He tried to work a little trick on me to get some whiskey, but it didn't prosper."

"Exit Jacky, the biggest nuisance on legs," said Ewalds solemnly. "He has cluttered up the guard-house nine-tenths of his time, and been a demoralizing influence from the time he came until this minute. May he break his neck before nightfall!"

Across the glaring stretch of plains a horseman in uniform was progressing at a steady gait. The sand burned beneath the animal's feet; he hung his head disconsolately and panted in the intense heat. Quivering heat-waves danced over the sand; the air seemed one blinding sheet of still flame. Even the tough mesquit appeared to shrivel visibly in the scorching atmosphere.

The man in the saddle merely kept his hat well over his eyes and stared ahead of him, apparently unmindful of personal discomfort or of his bravely struggling horse. Only two facts presented themselves to his sub-consciousness, one that he was very thirsty, and the other that drink was still several hours off.

In the distance a black speck came into view. The horseman's eyes came to life from their corpse-like dulness and watched it intently. The speck became a blot, and resolved itself slowly into a horse and rider stretching every nerve for haste. Something must be desperately wrong, or no man and beast would have struggled over the scorching plain at such a pace that day.

The soldier's narrowing eyes saw the horse lurch and stagger, stumble and rise again, fall—and lie there. The rider bent over his beast, as though to assure himself that it was beyond further exertions, and then hurried ahead on foot. From out of the brazen sky over by the low hills on the south a dark blot appeared, and a buzzard circled lazily overhead and hovered there.

The man hurried on. Once he tripped over a mesquit and fell heavily, but picked himself up again and strode ahead, waving his hat eagerly at the cavalryman. Thank God for that blue uniform, so near him now!

"Uprising!—'Paches!" he gasped thickly, reeling against the saddle. "Gray Coyote's out, damn him! My God! I came home to find my wife and boys dead across my own door-sill. And my little girl can't be found. They've taken her prisoner, the devils! Oh, the devils!"

He looked up, breathing like a winded animal, and saw the gaunt coppery face staring down at him with glittering eyes. Screaming out a curse, he jerked back and stumbled on again towards the distant post, where lay not only protection, but revenge.

The big cavalryman crouched low over his horse for a moment, and rose with a yell which made the other man look hastily back.

The startled animal plunged forward, swerving sharply from its course. A blue coat, part of a uniform, flew through the air and lay on the burning sand. The man looking back saw a shouting, furious savage spurring his horse towards the south. Private John Williams was a man of the past. This was Red Buffalo, the Sioux.

Some years ago there was a savage skirmish between an untamed band of Apaches and an angry horde of Sioux. Gray Coyote, a young buck of the Apaches, had stolen a squaw and two fine horses from Old Buffalo, a warrior much esteemed in the councils of the Sioux. Gray Coyote merited his name.

This caused the quarrel. The battle followed, hot and furious. The troops from the nearest fort swooped quickly down and spoiled matters by their interference, and both bands were sent back in disgrace to their reservations; but they were too late to prevent the famous fight between Gray Coyote, the thief, and Red Buffalo, the young son of Old Buffalo, of the Sioux. Only it was never finished.

Gray Coyote could lie as craftily as he could steal. He kept the squaw and the two horses, and Red Buffalo carried a great scar on his jaw when he joined the Fifty-Ninth Cavalry, U. S. A., ten years later.

At sunset the air became more endurable. A detachment of the Fifty-Ninth trotted briskly out from the garrison and forged steadily ahead towards the hills on the south. The news of the uprising had reached them only an hour before, but the man who had brought it was with them now, refusing to eat or rest until he had hunted down the band which had left his home in ruins.

The troops moved with little noise. The dusk deepened, and the stars came out to light their way. It would take until morning to reach the arable stretches of land which the Apaches were ravaging, and then their work would be but just begun.

Ewalds, hearing of Jacky's conduct, had said two short, angry words, biting them off sharply, which had expressed the opinion of all. Paxton had kicked viciously at a stone in his path and frowned.

"It's queer, blamed queer. Jacky and Gray Coyote don't love each other, Ewalds."

Sunrise brought them in front of a half-burned house, its charred timbers still sluggishly smoking. Faces grew graver at the sight of it, and they examined it hastily and without comment.

Across the blackened threshold lay the body of a young boy, burned and mutilated. One hand was chopped off and gone. A man lay near, his broken rifle still clutched in his hand. On the sparse grass behind the house a woman and a little child lay huddled, face downward, overtaken in their flight.

There was nothing to be done here. The Fifty-Ninth resumed its trot southward, more rapidly now and with lowering faces.

"And yet some fools down East sit and drivel about the Indian's *immortal soul!*" snapped Ewalds to his assistant, and the youngster's face twitched as he looked backward at the figures in the coarse grass. He had a little wife of his own at the post, and a baby like that.

Several miles farther another desolated home appeared. An empty house, yard trampled and torn up by racing savages and stolen cattle, and stiffening human bodies—one, two, three—sickening to look upon, lying twisted and doubled as they had fallen.

The Fifty-Ninth pushed ahead faster.

One tidy farm-house almost in the shadow of the hills was still burning.

"Not far off now," was the thought that stirred through the ranks. Eyes swept the horizon more carefully, and hands crept unconsciously nearer their weapons.

Over the top of the first squat hill a dark face peered stealthily

through the underbrush. Not so much as a wisp of black hair was visible from below. The watcher dropped nearly flat with the ground and squirmed away.

In a moment he was joined by a second and a third. They whispered, spread out, and ran swiftly ahead for two good miles to a narrow valley closely penned between two thickly grown hills.

A clear bird-call sounded out across the hill-tops. From the distant right came a faint answer. A second later it was caught up from another direction and repeated from the little valley.

The troops had paused at the foot of the hilly land to rest and water their horses, panting wearily from the hard ride and the intense heat. They could not stop long, for the foe was ahead of them and must not be allowed to reach the next settlement. The distant bird-calls were drowned out in the bustle of dismounting.

Back in the quiet hills the leaves rustled and rustled, and the bushes shook strangely.

The shade of the hills was grateful. The hot troopers sighed as they entered it. Their eyes ached from the glare of the sun on the sandy plains and the long stretch of rolling land they had left.

Still the stealthy rustling on the hill-sides, two good miles away.

Riders galloping ahead saw nothing. Why should they? Here and there a boulder or bush could have told its own story, but it was just over the brows of the hills on both sides that the underbrush was so strangely alive.

The troops streamed into the narrow valley.

Little Rawlins, who had come out burning for flight, grumbled to Sergeant Barnes that the 'Paches were at least a thousand miles away, and it was his opinion that the Fifty-Ninth was going at a beastly slow pace, anyway.

From a tangled bush on the slope to the left there leaped out a puff of white smoke. A bullet passed little Rawlins with a sharp "sping!" and flattened itself against a boulder. From the right another came hissing down, another, and another, and a trooper reeled in his saddle.

"My Lord, they're on us!" exclaimed Rawlins excitedly.

The hills awakened and echoed to the sharp crack-crack of answering rifles. From out of a sprawling bush a dark, naked figure leaped straight up, lurched downward, and lay there.

Over the brows of the two hills swarmed a yelling horde. They swept in from the end of the little valley, ran and dodged, fired, and dodged again at its outlet.

"Trapped, by the Lord!"

Someone jerked this out as he snapped in a cartridge and saw a leaping figure drop to the ground in response to his shot. Rifles barked angrily, and again roared together in a menacing volume of sound. The

troops fought their way outward, towards something more like shelter. Bullets whizzed down at them from above and from all around, passing one with a spiteful "zip!" to leave a comrade huddled silently on the ground or pinned beneath a fallen horse.

"I got you that time," fiercely snorted Ewalds, who was always in the thickest of every fight. A coppery figure had just plunged forward in answer to his shot, and he felt an angry satisfaction in it. "Oh, you devils, you cursed devils! You've got us, damn you! We're half gone now, and the rest'll follow."

All this came in angry jerks under his breath as he fired and loaded and fired again, desperately and rapidly, as all around him were doing.

The troops had worked their way slowly up the hill-side, and were scattered behind the insufficient shelter of trees, bushes, and wounded, quivering horses. This afforded protection from the front, but still the scattering fire from above spit viciously down upon them. One-half the detachment lay dead or wounded along the desperate way by which they had come. Wounded horses fled swiftly down the little valley, crying shrilly in pain and trampling the wounded and dying.

"We can't hold out more than ten minutes longer, but if they beat us it'll be because there isn't a live man left to fight," panted little Rawlins desperately to the sergeant, and the sergeant nodded, and a moment later stiffened out and doubled over on him with a bullet in his chest.

The disorderly horde before them, screaming, leaping, yelling in a horrid frenzy, pressed on the handful of soldiers for a hand-to-hand struggle. Victory had made them worse than demons.

Over the brow of the hill behind them rose an ear-splitting screech which sounded high and blood-curdling above the noise of firing and shouting and rent the heavens.

"More of 'em," groaned Colonel Paxton to himself, as with one wounded shoulder and the blood trickling down from a scalp wound he rallied his weakening force.

There was a momentary lull in the firing. Soldiers and Apaches looked hastily to see from whom that sound had come. A compact, swarming mass of Indians, yelling, howling, swept headlong down the hill-side and crashed into the surprised Apaches, who recoiled from the impetus. At the head of the new-comers was a gaunt savage with a scar on his jaw. He was naked to the waist, and wore a pair of military trousers in Uncle Sam's blue.

"It's Jacky! They're Sioux!" yelled little Rawlins frantically, hobbling recklessly forward towards the struggling, fighting mass, as his dazed eyes took in the situation. "Whoopee! Bully for Jack——"

A heavy blow toppled him over, and he lay unconscious under a great bush. The rallying troops hurled themselves forward on the straggling chaos of Sioux and Apaches, now closely concentrated.

Jacky

The Apaches were taken by surprise. Before they could recover from the shock they were losing fast, and doubled and dodged in search of shelter. The Sioux followed them fast and relentlessly hemmed them in.

In the midst of all this the Sioux in military trousers was engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with a big Apache. The Apache's face was streaming with blood. He made a swift lunge at his adversary, and the blood spurted from a great wound in Jacky's naked chest. A snarling yell broke from the Sioux's livid lips. A cavalry sabre, stolen from the post, leaped up in the air and hissed downward, catching the Apache across the face. He lurched forward, horrible to look at, and fell, with the cavalry sabre deep in his side.

A yell rose from both Apaches and Sioux. The battle was won.

In the open-air hospital, in which Ewalds and his helpers had their hands more than full, Jacky lay in pompous state, surrounded by a constantly shifting group of soldiers who took a peep at him as they passed by on other errands. He had a great many bandages wound about him, some with the fast ebbing blood already staining through, and he looked very, very disreputable. But in the soul of Jacky there was a deep and lasting satisfaction.

"I guess he's done for," assented Ewalds in answer to a low-toned question from Colonel Paxton. "We've fixed him up as comfortable as we could. He did us a pretty good turn, if it wasn't strictly in accordance with regulations."

Paxton thought of those already dead and nodded. His own head was bound about with a great bandage, which gave his thoughtful face a reckless, piratical look. He frowned a little as a rough litter was carried past him bearing Sergeant Barnes towards that spot on the right where the stiff, quiet ones lay. There were many of these. Paxton walked back to Jacky and stood looking down at him.

Little Rawlins came hobbling up, still dazed and bewildered from the blow which had stunned him.

"They tell me Jacky killed Gray Coyote. Where is the old 'Pache? What does he look like?" he demanded peremptorily, bearing down on one of Ewald's assistants.

Jacky opened one eye. The other was eclipsed under a bandage.

"He look like heap damn fool now," huskily observed the fallen warrior, who had caught the pernicious part of the white man's language far sooner than its grammar. With these memorable words upon his lips the spirit of Red Buffalo passed into the Great Beyond and the happy hunting-grounds, where no Apache shall come.

They buried him with honors, remembering that it was through him that they too were not numbered with those silent ones.

A delegation of Sioux, pacified now and well content with the result of their uprising, stood solemnly by as the last salute from living soldier to dead comrade rolled heavily forth across the silent plains, and returned to their homes much impressed by the ceremony.

Thus died Red Buffalo, the Sioux, and was gathered to his fathers, and his name and deeds are passed from father to son in the history of his tribe.

And the guard-house missed him sorely.



THE CAÑON OF THE YELLOWSTONE

BY MILDRED I. MCNEAL

END of the path, of the long wood, of the gloom—
 End of my weariness!
 My body sings with my soul, my soul flies straight,
 As a glad bird out of a darkened room,
 Into this silent, generous, golden place,
 There, in the sun, to assume
 The early innocent state
 It wore, methinks, before
 It ever looked the stern world in the face.

No Raphael spread
 The fair, perpetual morning of this color.
 The depths and distances,
 The shadows and the lights,
 The glory and the dream,
 Rose from no Angelo's laborious chisel.
 Following one quiet, potent will,
 The snows of winter and the suns of June,
 The river and the winds,
 Moving in harmony and without haste
 On their appointed way,
 Wrought out the shining wonder.

Oh, One hath been here from whom man must learn!
 He set the splendid pledge
 And bade us read the glory out of it.
 All day I sit,
 Content with being at the cliff's bright edge,
 Desiring no return.

THE VANDERDONCK SAND-BANK

By Edith Robinson

Author of "A Mock Caliph and His Wife"



IN the minds of certain of its inhabitants, Schenebec was divided into three sections—the United Electric Works, College Hill, and the Cemetery, in the inverse importance of their enumeration. It was surprising to note how often Fate had chosen to make conspicuous an insignificant little village. There, in the days of the French and Indian War, had occurred one of the most terrible massacres known to pioneer history. Its traditions were preserved in the Cemetery. Not without pride did the older people point to their names on various commemorative tablets. The location of the College there was for no other apparent reason than that Fate so willed it; although not large, it was generally recognized as one of the most progressive institutions of learning in the country. In another freak Fate had decreed that there should be located the yards of the United Electric Company. One day the President of the company—its works were then on the seaboard—was passing through Northern New York. The train met with a slight accident near Schenebec; from the car window could be seen a range of unoccupied buildings. The President spent the few minutes' detention in inspecting the old sheds. They were to be bought at a low figure. Other advantages of the situation became apparent. Among them were a large surrounding area of flat country, accessibility to the great centres by canal, river, and railroad. To-day the works of the United Electric Company was a town by itself, controlling sixty per cent. of the electric interests of the country—the forty per cent. being in the hands of its rival, the Westerfeldt, which, it was well known, was making every effort to reverse the proportion.

At five o'clock every afternoon a throng of workingmen, ten thousand strong, of every sort and condition, poured from the yards. Those engaged in the mechanical parts of the Works lived for the most part in the same neighborhood—an unsavory district of narrow streets and sunless lanes bordering the canal. A line of street-cars had its terminus within the yards, and innumerable bicycles in long lines of sheds afforded transit for another class of workers. Out beyond College Hill—which in the peaceful seclusion of its grounds seemed to stand for a

different world from that of the great, bustling town at its feet—was another settlement. Row after row of neat little apartment-houses were stretching farther and farther into the country as the new line of electric cars extended itself, till it seemed as though ere long Schenectady would touch hands with its neighboring town. Apart from these dwellings of the upper workmen dwelt the chief engineers and high officials of the company in a district of beautiful country homes with spacious grounds, a Country Club, golf links, and a society that, mingling with the older life on College Hill, represented much that was best of both progressive and conservative in the social order.

Two years ago Rodney Stevens had been one of the successful candidates—limited to the five or six men of the highest rank in the graduating class—sent by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as its quota of men accepted by the United Electric—a position coveted by every man in the course, although its actual conditions did not appear enviable. His work was oiling machinery, mending a broken rivet here, driving a bolt there; his pay was ten cents an hour. It was farther set down in the contract that any invention or improvement upon any invention made by him while in the company's service was to be sold outright to the company for the sum of one dollar. To be sure, he was at liberty to learn what he could by observation, but, restricted to one corner of the vast shop, such opportunities were limited.

But, undaunted by the unpromising features of his position, the young fellow set resolutely to work to make the most of its advantages. His evenings in the poor little room near the canal were spent in poring over the latest works in electrical science. It seemed an upward step when he obtained leave to spend a few hours weekly in laboratory work. He turned his back upon social distractions, for, even if he had had the time, the wherewithal was lacking for evening clothes and gloves. It was matter of rejoicing when he was allowed to attend the meetings of a club composed of some of the leading scientific men at the Works, where papers were read that detailed the latest discoveries and the most advanced theories in electrical science.

At these meetings Ruthven was sometimes present. He spoke rarely, more rarely still he read a paper. When he did it was regarded as an event of the first magnitude. Ruthven was conceded to be the greatest scientific genius in electrical science in the country. He had written a book that it was said no one but himself could understand. He came to the Works only once or twice a week, but behind the actual and visible authority of the President and General Manager he was recognized as the controlling spirit of the whole vast enterprise. Rodney was never in his presence without the involuntary thrill he had felt when for the first time he stood on the threshold of the power-house—the radius of the force that controlled the Works and extended its influence far beyond the limits of the town.

"Ruthven isn't much in practical matters, but he sees to the heart of things," one of the older men had once said to Rodney.

Once, not so long ago, Rodney Stevens would have said that unremitting toil, dogged endeavor, a "dead set" at success, would bring its sure reward. Now, at the end of the two years that he had fondly thought his term of probation, he found himself precisely where he was at the beginning. In that time he had seen other men—some his own classmates, whom he could not but recognize as of less ability than himself—passed over his head. Perhaps it was that these successful ones had some "pull," perhaps he was "side-tracked" for the inscrutable reason that brings so many promising men to naught; perhaps the freakish Fate that had in hand the destinies of Schenebec held her latest trick in store for him.

When Rodney asked the Manager for a renewal of contract with promotion the reply was brief. There was no opening either at home or abroad. If Stevens chose to remain at the Works on the same terms, he could do so; if not, a crowd of eager workers from the technical schools were waiting to take his place. The reply was not unkind, nor did Rodney so construe it; it was the mere unvarnished statement of a business situation. Rodney was only an insignificant cog in the vast system of human machinery, an atom in the stream of intellectual overproduction pouring from the colleges all over the country.

He left the Manager's office in bitterness of heart confronted by a double problem: to go or to stay—his contract expired at twelve o'clock that night; to tell the company the discovery he had made only yesterday afternoon in his laboratory work, or to keep it for his own behoof.

For a long time one of the chief problems before the company had been the production of a better and cheaper method of illumination than the one now in use. It was to the solution of this problem that Rodney had bent all his energies and which he was now satisfied that he had solved. Certain it was that by his method, which dispensed with the filament, substituting therefor the vapor of mercury, the cost of illumination was reduced three-fourths, while the light produced was of far better quality. If he told the company of his discovery, as by the terms of the contract he was bound to do, it would mean thousands of dollars in the pockets of men whose income was already past reckoning, while he—Rodney Stevens—would not be the better off by a dollar—even the dollar set down in the contract was never paid. If he held his tongue, what living man would ever know of his breach of faith? His business reputation would never suffer from such imputation. The road to success lay fair and open before him. He had but to get his discovery patented; then go to the Westerfeldt Company and boldly demand his price, which should include a good position in the com-

pany's service as well as a round sum of money. He knew that the Westerfeldt would accede to any terms to gain so enormous an advantage over its rival. Why should he hesitate at a course so manifestly consistent with modern business policy? The world of "consolidations" and "trusts" recognized but one principle—"Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost." In an overwhelming flood of fierce revolt against the existing order of things—the fiercer that he felt it to be so impotent—Rodney asked what right had any man, or body of men, to take the brains of earnest workers like himself, out of which to coin vast fortunes? Was there, indeed, any other course open to him? He had reached the limit of endurance. Without hope, with foiled ambition, how could he go on in the sordid life divided between the machine-shop and the stifling little room by the canal?

Bending low over the handle-bar of his wheel, he had gone a long distance from the yards before he looked about him. He found himself near what was known as the Vanderdonck Sandbank. In the early days of the Dutch régime in the State of New York the Vanderdonck family had owned a vast manorial estate along the Upper Hudson and its tributaries. When the English came into possession of the country, partly by force, partly by trickery, all of his landed property was stripped from Peter Vanderdonck with the exception of a few sandy acres, from which it was difficult to wring even a bare subsistence. With the coming of the United Electric to Schenebec and the impulse thus given to building, the sand had become in demand for various purposes, so that the story of Vanderdonck's sandbank was familiar at the Works. Rodney remembered to have heard that the walls of the house—that had been standing since the feudal days of its ownership—bore the marks of bullets received in savage warfare, and he was still boy enough to take a vivid interest in all that related to Indians. As he was examining the weatherbeaten old timbers the owner of the house appeared, and to Rodney's apologetic explanation of his intrusion pointed out the bullet-holes, and the two fell naturally into talk of the days the scars signalized. As they sat on the stoop, before them lay the sandbanks, ugly rifts in their surface showing the inroads of the spade and shovel. Beyond was a magnificent view of river and rich meadow land, stretching in the distance to wooded uplands bounded by the faint blue line of the Catskills.

"How you must hate the English!" exclaimed Rodney involuntarily.

"Yes, it belonged to us once, and by rights it should be ours now," answered the heir of the sorry sand heap. "I don't know as we've any reason to love the English, but we've had to get used to their being here," he added dryly.

"But he, your ancestor," persisted the young man, "how could he ever have looked upon that—and this"—indicating the past and the

present inheritance of the Vanderdoncks—"and not feel his blood boil within him, not to be ready when his turn came"—Rodney's breath came short and sharp through his almost closed lips—"to strike a blow at the men who had robbed him of his rights?"

His host smoked for some minutes in silence. He too was looking over the lost principality of his family, and perhaps he too was thinking his own thoughts.

"Peter Vanderdonck's turn did come," he said at length quietly. "You've read about the massacre yonder, of course, but sometimes there's a bit of history that does not get into the books. Would you care to hear it?" And as Rodney nodded with boyish eagerness to listen to a tale of Indian warfare the owner of the sandheap began:

"It happened in the French and Indian days. Peter Vanderdonck, the son of the old Patroon, after the coming of the English and the loss of his patrimony, turned trapper. It was when he was up north that he learned of the expedition the French were fitting out against our frontier with their Indian allies—the most bloodthirsty of the whole savage crew. All things considered, it didn't seem just his business to warn the people over there"—nodding towards Schenebec—"and run a very considerable risk of being scalped along with them. You might say that no decent fellow would have done anything else, but you must remember that those were rough days, when to be born of different nationalities was to be born foes, and Peter Vanderdonck had special reason to hate the English. I don't know his thoughts at that time; I do know his actions.

"He cached his furs and hastened through the wilderness in the storms and perils of midwinter to Schenebec. There was a fort and a stout stockade there, with men and arms sufficient to defend the place if they hadn't been blamed fools; for they scoffed at Vanderdonck's warning. The French would not be so mad as to attempt the invasion! Unbroken leagues of snow lay between them and Canada. In derision they made a snow image for a sentinel and set it just within the stockade by the north gate, that they left wide open and unguarded. Then—men, women, and children—they went to bed, to be awakened by the savage yell that was the announcement of their doom."

"But he,—your ancestor,—did he escape?" asked Rodney breathlessly.

"He hid in the woods, and finally got to New York with the news of the massacre."

"Didn't the English reward him?"

"They did not add a grain to the sandheap yonder," answered Vanderdonck slowly.

Insistent thoughts beat upon Rodney's brain as with the force of one of the great hammers at the Works. Supposing Vanderdonck had not brought the warning, what would his own after life have been worth?

True, he owed the English nothing, but was the sum of his indebtedness closed thereby? True, those days were rougher, simpler days, but did not men then, as now, have to face the same eternal problems of right and wrong? Then, as now, there were men actuated only by greed. But then, as now, as there would ever be, were there men who would answer the old questions simply and nobly, not weakly seeking their evasion by miserable shifts of expediency or arts of sophistry. Not by him should their tale be lessened!

He arose abruptly.

"It is dark. I must get back to town," he answered his host's hospitable query.

The next minute he was speeding along the highway—the same path over which the brave Dutchman had hastened on his fruitless errand two hundred odd years ago. Whether the stirring tale, the exhilarating exercise, the keen night air, or one and all of these causes combined had got into his blood—with perhaps something outside of them all—if the savage band had been at his heels he could not have "scorched" at greater speed.

Gradually as his mental vision cleared one only thought impelled him: to keep faith—not merely with the company,—that consideration for the time, indeed, had slipped into the background,—but with God and his own soul.

Despite his pace, it was late when he reached town and the lights were out in most of the houses. Perhaps in part out of his own overwrought mood came the urgency of the need of telling his secret before midnight. How, otherwise, could he feel that he had kept that eternal pact? To his dismay, the Manager's house was in darkness.

He rode slowly on, reluctant to abandon his purpose, but seeing no way in which to accomplish it. The turn of the road brought him within sight of Ruthven's house. Lights were visible in the master's study, and the urgency of the moment overcoming his awe of the great man, Rodney turned into the driveway. Evidently the servants had retired for the night, for it was Ruthven himself who opened the door.

"I am Stevens—from the Works. May I speak with you?" begged the young man.

Something in the voice may have reached some inner perception of the master genius, for he nodded, and without parley ushered the young workman into his study.

There, clearly and succinctly, Rodney told his tale. Ruthven listened in silence for the most part, but with his penetrating eyes never leaving the young man's face.

"My time expires to-night," concluded Rodney.

Even as he spoke some neighboring church-bells began to sound the hour. Rodney counted the strokes as though each one hastened for him some impending doom. Doubtless it was part of the same uncanny

fancy that it seemed to him Ruthven was counting the strokes also out of some unfathomable purpose. The silence between the two men was unbroken till the last stroke of midnight had rung out.

"I am free!" said Rodney, not without an underlying bitterness. Free—for what? What, indeed, did the future hold for him? The utter blankness of that moment overwhelmed him as no actual physical or mental suffering could have done.

"You are free!" said Ruthven, with underlying gratulation. "Wait," he added, as his visitor arose. "What are your plans for the future?"

"I have none," was the reply that came to Rodney's lips, partly in the decent reserve that would hide one's deeper feelings, partly because in the turmoil of his brain he could scarce have formulated a definite plan of action. But something held the words. Perhaps the time and the hour invited confidence; perhaps the personality of the man before him impelled it. Once his lips were opened, he did not pause till the full tale of his work, his ambition, his failure, with to-night's temptation, had been told. Ruthven listened in silence, but in his eyes was the look sometimes seen in them when he had been wresting some secret from nature. He spoke at last — irrelevantly, as it seemed to his excited listener.

"It has been thought best to keep the matter a secret," said Ruthven, "but there is no longer reason for concealment. It has been the earnest desire on the part of both the College authorities and some of the leading men at the Works to form some link between them. The matter has been under consideration for some time at Washington, and the new School of Electrical Science will soon be opened—under government auspices. The authorities have done me the honor to place me at its head. It has been my intention to offer you the position of instructor in the new school."

Hardly crediting his good fortune, Rodney stammered his acceptance, his gratitude. When, at last, he stood with his host at the open door, early dawn was in the sky.

"Has my luck turned, or is the old copy-book maxim true, that honesty is the best policy, even in the days of trusts and combinations?" suggested Rodney, too young not to feel somewhat ashamed of voicing his better feelings.

But the man by his side was too great to be ashamed.

"It depends on what you call the best. If you mean thereby money, worldly position, a 'pull' with the Legislature, the best policy is honesty only so far as you'll be found out if you do the other thing. But if you mean that which comes to a man when he's alone in an hour like this, then I should say it's the best policy—in fact, the only paying policy."

But Ruthven was not much in practical matters. He saw to the heart of things.

AN UNWILLING DELILAH

By *Ella Middleton Tybout*

Author of "The Ass that Vanquished Balaam," "Ananias of Poketown," etc.



"**H**IT am pow'ful quare," ejaculated Aunt Martha Young in troubled accents.

Aunt Janty Gibbs shook her head mournfully in response, and closed her lips tightly as though to repress the words trembling upon them.

"I's knowed de day," continued Aunt Martha, "when de benches wouldn' hole de folks whut wanted tuh come tuh Little Bethel, no mattah how close we set."

"Room tuh spaiah now," said Aunt Janty gloomily.

There was trouble in Poketown directly traceable to the arrival of the new pastor at Zion Church. Hitherto Little Bethel had been the tabernacle of the élite of the village, and had tolerated with haughty indifference the existence of a humble edifice across the bridge known as Zion and patronized by a few faithful spirits, chiefly from the surrounding country.

Little Bethel had a gracefully tapering steeple, and the ladies of the congregation were particular about wearing straw hats in summer and felt ones in winter; Zion had no steeple whatever, and the ladies who worshipped within its unplastered walls were fortunate if they had any hats at all, regardless of texture. The benches of Little Bethel were provided with backs, and the gentlemen of the congregation usually wore brightly polished, loudly creaking boots, and displayed the corner of a pocket-handkerchief artistically drooping from the pockets of their waistcoats; the benches of Zion were backless, and the gentlemen who sat thereon used grease instead of blacking on their boots,—when they had any,—and were ignorant of the advantages of pocket-handkerchiefs. In a word, Little Bethel did not associate with Zion; it was the invidious distinction of class.

It was therefore not surprising that Aunt Martha Young and Aunt Janty Gibbs, pillars of Little Bethel, viewed with consternation the expansion of Zion after the arrival of Brother Tyndal. Tyndal, Son of Thunder, he preferred to be called; it was the cognomen bestowed upon him because of his eloquence, and he felt he had earned it right-fully.

An Unwilling Delilah

"I don' see, nohow," said Aunt Martha, continuing her remarks upon the scanty attendance at the evening service of Little Bethel, "I don' see nohow whut's gwine tuh be did 'bout it."

"Look at 'em," exclaimed Aunt Janty, resentfully indicating the stream of people crossing the bridge and meandering slowly down the street, "dey done come f'om Zion!"

Judging from her tone, coming from Zion was equivalent to going to perdition.

Brother Tyndal passed, surrounded by an admiring coterie. He was a tall, slender young mulatto, whose most remarkable attribute appeared to be the thick black hair which reached well below his shoulders, and which he kept brushed until it stood out about his head like a glistening but bushy aureole. It was doubtful if an ordinary comb could penetrate the matted undergrowth beneath the shining exterior, but it was not fitting that the sheep of Zion should question the toilet of their shepherd. Close behind, but alone and unworshipped, followed Brother Wiggins, the once popular pastor of Little Bethel. He paused to exchange a few words with his faithful adherents at the gate of Aunt Martha Young.

"Come in," said that lady, hospitably opening her front door. "Brother Wiggins, now's de time fo' yo' an' me an' Aun' Janty tuh take an' insult ovah dis hyah mattah o' Zion. Dey ain' gwine tuh be no Little Bethel lef' 'cep'n us ef we don' up an' ack rapid-like."

Brother Wiggins sank wearily into a chair and thrust his hands deep in his pockets. Walking home alone from his deserted church behind the triumphant Zionites had been to him a journey through the Valley of Humiliation.

"I dunno," he said reflectively, "huccum Brothah Tyndal tuh git sich a hol' ovah de lambs of Little Bethel."

"I knows," said Aunt Janty in the sepulchral tones of one who feels that the time has come to speak out. Her companions turned and looked at her in surprised inquiry, but she firmly maintained her position, nodding her head convincingly.

"Hit am he haiah," she announced, and as she observed a puzzled expression on the faces of her auditors she repeated her remark a little louder.

"Splain yo'se'f, Aun' Janty," suggested Brother Wiggins, "splain yo'se'f."

"Brothah Tyndal," said Aunt Janty mysteriously, "ain' de fus' man whut am beholden tuh de haiahs o' he haid fuh de strongness an' de 'trackshuns of he pusson. Membah Samson."

"Dat's so, Aun' Janty, dat's so!" ejaculated Brother Wiggins in evident admiration.

"Sho's yo' bawn," continued Aunt Janty, "hit am de haiah whut am 'sponsible. Kin yo' grow haiah like his'n, Brothah Wiggins?"

The gentleman addressed shook his head sadly. Nature having endowed Brother Wiggins with hirsute adornments which kinked tightly from the roots and covered his head like a skull-cap, it was manifestly impossible for him to compete with his rival in that respect. The three conspirators pondered uneasily; clearly the time for action had arrived. Something must be done.

"I knowed f'om de fus' dat he done got outside 'sistance," remarked Brother Wiggins vindictively; "reckon he tongue ain' quite ez slick ez he haiah, aftah all."

Aunt Martha had been recalling to the best of her ability the history of Samson, and had arrived at a definite conclusion.

"Who gwine tuh take an' cut it off?" she demanded abruptly.

The same question had risen to the lips of her companions, but had been repressed; they looked at one another inquiringly.

"Has yo' got de Good Book handy, Aun' Ma'thy?" inquired the preacher, and Aunt Martha producing it, the history of Samson was read aloud and commented upon.

"Hit wuh a lady whut done cut de haiah offen he haid," said Brother Wiggins with evident relief. "She done 'ticed him tuh go tuh sleep an' up an' tuck huh scissors outen huh pocket an' snipped it off."

"Humph," said Aunt Janty, "s'long's de haiah done git cut, hit don' make no mattah who take an' do de ack."

"Hit am got tuh be cut by a lady," repeated Brother Wiggins unctuously. "Dem am de wo'ds in de Book; 'tain't gwine tuh do no good fuh a man tuh go messin' whuh he ain' no use. Ef sich mattahs ain' done reg'lah, whut's de good o' doin' 'em at all? Kin a man 'tice a man? Tell me dat."

This argument, being unanswerable, was passed over in silence.

"Whut kin yo' do, Aun' Ma'thy?" he resumed persuasively; "yo's got a way wid yo', Aun' Ma'thy, dat am pow'ful takin'."

Aunt Martha settled her ample form more comfortably in her chair.

"Reckon meh days fuh 'ticemints an' sich am ovah," she said imperturbably.

Clearly Aunt Martha was not to be beguiled into personal action with regard to the hair of Brother Tyndal. Nor was Aunt Janty more encouraging, as the troubled eye of the preacher sought her face in evident anxiety; her shake of the head was final and decisive. As the trio again gravely considered the question, a shadow fell upon the windowshade.

"*Melindy!*" exclaimed Aunt Janty and Brother Wiggins in unison with evident relief.

An Unwilling Delilah

"Everybody know," said Brother Wiggins slowly, "dat when Melindy 'swade no man kin' 'ny."

"Dey ain' a man in Poketown," chimed in Aunt Janty, "whut wouldn' shave hisse'f bald ef Melindy spressed a zire fuh he haiah. T'ain't no reason Brothah Tyndal gwine tuh be diffunt."

Aunt Martha smiled with conscious pride; it was no small matter to be grandmother to the belle of Poketown.

"Me an' Melindy will do whut we kin, Brothah Wiggins," she promised rashly.

The next evening the three pillars of Little Bethel met again in the parlor of Aunt Martha Young. This time they were reinforced by the presence of Melinda, who sat sulkily aloof and apparently took but little interest in the proceedings.

"Aun' Ma'thy," said Brother Wiggins pompously, "has yo' done splaind tuh Melindy whut she got tuh do?"

"I done make huh read out loud tuh me twict ovah 'bout Mistah Samson an' he lady-frien'," replied Aunt Martha delicately.

"Whut yo' got tuh say fuh yo'se'f, Melindy?" asked Aunt Janty suddenly; but Melinda made no response.

"Min' yo' mannaahs, gal," admonished her grandmother severely.

Melinda turned her head slightly and addressed the masculine element.

"Does yo' sho' nuff b'lieve Brothah Tyndal am like Samson?" she inquired earnestly.

"I does," he returned with conviction.

"An' kin he do whut Samson done?" she continued.

"Ez long ez he haiah float out behin' he haid," replied Brother Wiggins solemnly, "dey ain' nawthin' he kain't do."

The girl twisted her fingers irresolutely and cast a rebellious glance at her grandmother.

"Do yo' own clippin'," she muttered sullenly. "'Tain' faiah tuh ax me tuh do whut yo's feahed tuh do yo'se'f."

"Melindy," said Aunt Martha warningly.

"Don' keer," said Melinda, bursting into tears. "I ain' gwine tuh be kilt wid no jawbone, so now!"

"Whut yo' means, Melindy?" queried Aunt Janty.

"Ole Samson he done kill folks wid de jawbone of a' ass," sobbed Melinda, "an' I reckon Brothah Tyndal done got he jawbone roun' handy. I ain' gwine tuh die yit; I's too young."

"Lemme 'zort wid huh," offered Brother Wiggins officiously, interrupting the angry retort of Aunt Martha and laying his hand on Melinda's shoulder as he spoke.

"Honey," he said quietly, "yo's wrong in yo' notions. Samson didn' kill nobody."

"Look in de Book," said the girl, unconvinced; "hit done say he kilt right an' lef' wid de jawbone of a' ass."

"Laws, Melindy," returned Brother Wiggins soothingly, "I dunno whut yo's thinkin' 'bout. Samson didn' kill nobody; he slew he enemies, dat's all."

"Dat's all," echoed Aunt Janty reassuringly.

"Dey's a heap o' diffunce betwix' killin' an' slewin'," explained the preacher condescendingly; "hit am only wicked men whut kills, but hit am de righteous an' dem whut is sanctified whut knows how tuh slew."

Melinda was now listening intently.

"I dunno," she remarked reflectively, "ez it make any mattah tuh dem whut de jawbone hit whuthah dey wuh kilt or slewed."

Brother Wiggins resorted to another expedient.

"Melindy," he said, "does yo' know why yo' done been s'lected tuh do dis pious ack fuh yo' chu'ch?"

"Caze yo's feahed tuh up an' do hit fuh yo'se'f," returned Melinda with recurring resentment in her tones.

"Caze dey ain' no lady in Poketown ez kin 'swade like yo' kin," he replied, "an' if dat long-haiahed 'zorter up in Zion kin hol' out 'g'inst yo', Melindy, honey, den he am mo' en morshial man."

Melinda simpered consciously; the right string had at last been pulled, and Brother Wiggins, seizing his opportunity, extorted a promise from her to waylay his rival at the first opportunity.

"Yo' mought begin by axin' de straightes' way tuh heav'n," suggested Aunt Janty thoughtfully, "an' say yo' done feel yo's stahted wrong, caze yo's done been trabellin' in de way Brothah Wiggins p'inted out."

"An' yo' kin keep yo' scissors handy in yo' pocket," added that gentleman; "dey ain' no tellin' when yo' chance gwine tuh come."

The fears of Melinda returned with redoubled force at this practical suggestion.

"I's skeert tuh tech de haiah o' Brothah Tyndal," she said nervously; "dey ain' no tellin' whut bones he done keep roun' tuh slew wid, same ez Samson. Ef he go tuh grapplin' down in he pocket I's gwine tuh up an' run away. I's skeert, dat's whut I is," finished the reluctant Delilah with a second burst of tears.

Brother Tyndal passed his hand caressingly over his sleek and shining locks and smiled encouragement at the suppliant beside him. It is undoubtedly easier to take some sinners by the hand and lead them forward in the straight and narrow way than to indicate it by merely standing aloof and pointing. There were times when Brother Tyndal found this duty not unpleasant, and this was one of them.

"Is yo' mo' easy-like in yo' min', l'il sistah?" he inquired with a gentle pressure of her hand.

The little sister said that her mind was quite at rest, but that she needed just one thing to make her happiness complete.

"I feels, Brothah Tyndal," she said earnestly, "dat ef I kep' a lock of yo' haiah in meh buzzom, ole Satan couldn't git in nohow."

Brother Tyndal merely responded vaguely that he would think about it. The scissors in Melinda's pocket weighed heavily at times and she longed to cast them aside. Moreover, she had been warned that morning by her grandmother that dire consequences awaited her if her task were not performed within a week, and Aunt Martha was a woman of her word. Melinda sighed heavily; her lot in life appeared most undesirable. Then too the fascinations of Brother Tyndal had not been exerted in vain, and Melinda felt she could not deprive him of his strength without acute regret on her own part. Her thoughts also dwelt constantly upon the concealed and unusual weapon with which his enemies were presumably destroyed.

"Brothah Tyndal," she said timidly, "does yo' keep yo' jawbone wid yo' alwiz?"

"I couldn' git 'long widout it nohow," returned Brother Tyndal in evident astonishment.

They paused at Melinda's front gate, and he refused her invitation to enter, saying he must go home and rest before the evening service.

"Is yo' gwine tuh be dah, l'il sistah?" he inquired, with an appealing glance.

"Is yo' cyahin' 'bout sich ez me?" asked Melinda, returning the glance with interest. And Brother Tyndal convinced her that he cared very much.

Melinda reluctantly entered the house, her work unperformed and her heart rebellious within her. Brother Wiggins and Aunt Martha greeted her with cold disapproval; they felt that Melinda must be spurred on towards her duty.

"How much longah," demanded her grandmother, "is yo' gwine tuh higgle ovah dat haiah bizness?"

"Dem ez puts dey han' tuh de plough an' looks back mus' take de konsekinkses," admonished Brother Wiggins severely.

Brother Wiggins felt bitterly on the subject, for the paucity of dimes and nickels in the offertory of Little Bethel had become appalling. Melinda, without responding, seated herself by the window and waited until it should be time to go to church. Evening service begins late in Poketown, to accommodate those who are obliged to wash the dishes of carnally minded Caucasians, therefore twilight deepened and the moon rose slowly over the tapering steeple of Little Bethel and the flat roof

of Zion. Hurried footsteps approached the house, and Aunt Janty Gibbs burst breathlessly into the room.

"Now am de time," she gasped; "he am gone tuh sleep in he back yahdin; I done seen him f'om meh kitchen windah."

"Come on, Melindy," said Brother Wiggins, rising resolutely, "de hough am at han.' Come fohwahd, Chile o' Little Bethel."

The Child of Little Bethel hung back, protesting vainly against her fate.

"Dis hyah ain' no time tuh stop fuh trifles," said Aunt Janty emphatically; "take huh by de han', Brothah Wiggins, an' pull hahd; me an' Aun' Ma'thy's gwine tuh push."

In this manner they proceeded by a circuitous and unfrequented route to the back yard of Brother Tyndal. There, indeed, lay the Son of Thunder stretched upon a bench, sleeping soundly but audibly, with his wealth of hair gently stirred by the evening breeze. The sight of the flowing locks exasperated Brother Wiggins beyond endurance.

"Do yo' juty," he commanded, pushing the shrinking girl forward.

"I's skeert," quavered Melinda, drawing her scissors slowly from her pocket.

"Whut yo's gwine tuh do," said Brother Wiggins reassuringly, "am gwine tuh make yo' fuhevah blessid."

Thus encouraged, Melinda took several steps forward.

"O Lawd," she ejaculated, pausing suddenly, "keep he han' f'om offen de jawbone."

"Dey ain' nawthin' gwine tuh keep my han' offen yo' jawbone ef yo' don' git tuh wuck," remarked Aunt Martha with unmistakable emphasis.

Melinda desperately thrust her scissors into the black hair before her. They were very sharp and cut clean and quickly, but years of growth had formed a felt-like covering on the head of Brother Tyndal which resisted the blades deliciously. Again and again she thrust the glittering shears, listening to them crunch their way through the soft, resisting mass with a thrill of pleasure. A demon of destruction seized the girl, and she slashed viciously in every direction across and around the head of Brother Tyndal. The victim stirred uneasily.

"Come away," whispered Brother Wiggins, pulling at her skirts, "come away. Yo's done noble, but he am gwine tuh wake up. Come away."

With a parting clash of her shears Melinda obeyed, and the conspirators stole swiftly homeward.

Tyndal, Son of Thunder, yawned and sat upright. Such was the thickness and tenaciousness of his hair that in spite of the recent attack most of it still clung together upon his head, although ready to fall apart at the touch of a finger. He realized that he had been asleep and

feared he was late for church, therefore he hurried off without the usual caress to his head. The route of Brother Tyndal was marked by stray locks of black hair, which fell here and there by the wayside unnoticed.

And he was very late. The congregation, taxing to the utmost the limited capacity of Zion, had been impatiently waiting for the best part of an hour. Brother Tyndal hurried, perspiring, into the pulpit.

"We will jine in singin' 'Mary and Ma'thy's jes' gone along,'" he announced, wiping his glistening forehead. A thick lock of black hair remained in his fingers when he withdrew his hand from his brow. Brother Tyndal laid it on the pulpit before him and stared long and earnestly, then cautiously felt the crown of his head; a second ringlet lay upon the pulpit beside the first. A few youthful spirits giggled outright, and the preacher shook his head at them reprovingly; quite a shower of black locks fell upon the floor around him. Brother Tyndal sank upon his sofa, dazed and mortified; at last he struggled to his feet and strove to address his flock.

"Meh brothahs an' meh sistahs," he began, "I dunno whut have done happen tuh me. I tuck some needful res' in meh back gyahdin in de quietude of de byhds an' de flowahs——"

"Reckon Brothah Tyndal been sleepin' wid de byhds so frequent he done begin tuh moult," called a voice from the rear bench on the left-hand side.

"'Peahs tuh me tuh zemble de tuckey buzzahd mo' en de byhds of de gyahdin," quickly responded an occupant of the corresponding bench on the right, and a ripple of irrepressible laughter stirred the congregation. Indeed, the pastor presented a sufficiently ludicrous spectacle to excuse this procedure, for here and there a long lock had escaped the vigilance of Melinda and stood boldly erect, or hung at right angles to the various almost bald spots scattered thickly over his cranium.

"Ain' yo' got no 'spec' fuh de sahvent o' de Lawd?" he shouted angrily, trying vainly to regain his receding supremacy.

"I proposes," continued the voice of the tormenter, "dat we c'lects de haiah an' makes it intuh mat'resses; reckon hit mought go roun' de congregation."

Verily the strength of Samson had departed.

Brother Wiggins sat in the pulpit of Little Bethel the Sunday following the events just recounted, and viewed with satisfaction the return of his straying lambs to the fold.

"I rises to renounce," he remarked, when the benches were all full, "I rises to renounce dat de shanty ovah de bridge dat some folks called de Chu'ch o' Zion am done shet up fuh good an' all. De Swo'd o' Jedg-mint have done fell heavy on de haid o' dat 'zumptious niggah whut

'rumed tuh call hisse'f de Son o' Thundah. Sich am de fate o' de sinful. I didn' say nawthin' when yo' done tuck yo'sefs ovah tuh Zion, caze I knowed de Lawd gwine tuh stan' by me an' Little Bethel. An' He done so; y-a-a-s, He done so."

"Hallelujah, praise de Lawd!" shouted Aunt Janty Gibbs suddenly.

"He done cleave de haid o' de upstaht," continued the preacher, when he could make himself heard,—“ya-a-s, dat's whut He done. De Swo'd o' Vengince done come down f'om heav'n while he slep' an' pull de haiahs o' 'ception outen he haid. An' whut's mo', meh frien's, de Lawd up an' done dis pious ack 'thout no wo'ds f'om me; He done lay de upstaht low an' 'prive him of de wicked haiah dat he done kunjah wid. Sich am de konsekinsees o' sinfulness; sich am de fate o' de big-goty! May de flamin' Swo'd keep on fallin' on dem whut 'zerts Little Bethel, may de han'——”

“A-a-amen,” called Aunt Martha Young, unable to keep silence longer, “glory! glory! hallelujah!”

And the foundation of Little Bethel rocked with the fervent thanksgivings of its returned flock.

In the shadow of the deserted Zion stood Samson, shorn indeed of his strength and bitter in his denunciations of his shearer. Brother Tyndal had been obliged to visit the barber, and the result was not pleasing to him. By his side was Melinda; she had cast her lot with that of her discomfited swain and had promised to comfort him by becoming Mrs. Tyndal and seeking other fields than Poketown, but her guilty secret became oppressive at times.

“I likes yo' lots bettah 'thout all dat haiah,” she remarked tentatively.

“Jes' lemme git hol' o' de pusson whut done it,” he said grimly, “dat's all. Jes' lemme git meh han' on him.”

Melinda slipped her hand lovingly within his arm.

“Would yo' slew him wid yo' jawbone?” she inquired, her thoughts immediately recurring to that dreaded instrument of destruction. She had resolved to institute a thorough search for it and to conceal it forever when she should have free access to all the possessions of Brother Tyndal.

“I reckon,” returned that gentleman thoughtfully, “dat dis yeah am a 'casion fuh razahs, er fuh sistesses, mo' en fuh jaws.”

A loud burst of thanksgiving arose from brilliantly lighted Little Bethel, which was plainly visible from where they stood. Brother Tyndal turned towards Zion, dark and silent, the scene of his triumphs and also of his humiliation.

“Jes' lemme git hol' on him onct,” he muttered. “Jes' lemme lay meh hand on him onct, O Lawd! Jes' onct.”

128 Morning on the Prairies—The Angel

Melinda laid her head affectionately upon his shoulder.

"Honey," she said, "I's gwine tuh he'p yo' look fuh dat sinful pusson."

"I only axes tuh tech him onct," he repeated, his arm about her slender waist.

"Me an' yo'," she responded, "am gwine tuh look fuh him all de time. Jes' wait twell I gits hol' on him. I's gwine tuh show him whut I thinks o' sech actions. I has meh own 'pinions 'bout 'em. Yo' ain' gwine tuh fin' him 'thout me, honey; we'll jes' lay holt on de wicked pusson whenever we ketches him."

"Dat's so," responded unsuspecting Brother Tyndal, "yo's pow'ful peaht, Melindy. I reckons maybe yo' kin be of some 'sistance tuh me, ef yo' is a lady."

And Melinda smiled quietly as she changed the subject.



MORNING ON THE PRAIRIES

BY ERNEST RAYMOND SIMON

OVER the prairies throb wild ecstasies
As the white dawn lifts high the gates of Night
And props them open with the morning star;
The meadow-lark shouts out his soul's delight,
And through the doors of Day that stand ajar
A laughter sweeps and rides upon the breeze.

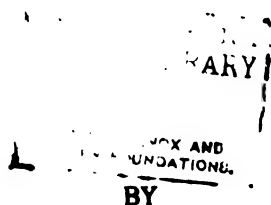


THE ANGEL

BY FULLERTON L. WALDO

ART Thou, Lord God, seraphim-defended,
Unaware
Of Thy lone estrangéd angel splendid
Standing there? . . .
Lord God, let him once more see the faces
Of his Home;
To Earth's olden, dear, familiar places
Let him come;
Let Thine angel through the windless heaven
Like a star
Fall, to fold his wide white wings at even
Where They are!

THE GREEN DRAGON



ELIZABETH DUER



PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
1903

**COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

AUGUST, 1903



THE GREEN DRAGON

BY ELIZABETH DUER

L

I AM sure you know Steeplands as well as I do, only, perhaps, by another name. It is where the mountains of the Hudson Highlands have seated themselves in lazy rest, their heads bent, their feet bathed by the river, and their broad laps offered for farmland and village to the inhabitants of this loveliest of valleys.

I am one of the inhabitants, and I own many an acre of lawn and garden and hothouse and farmland beyond, all left to me by my husband, Tom Eliot, who died three years before this story opens, and is buried in the little graveyard behind the church on the knoll.

I have plenty of grand neighbors, people who have houses at Newport and who come bustling to their river places for six weeks in the spring and autumn, with saucy town servants who have no respect for our dear old villagers; but I make Steeplands my home except during the month of November, when I always pay a visit to my only relation in town and replenish my wardrobe against the approaching cold of the season at Rookswood. Tom left the place to me, and it is a matter of duty with me to see that it is taken care of as he would have liked.

To make a confidence at the very outset, I must explain that Tom always gave, expecting no return,—love for friendship—admiration for mild regard,—and now that he has gone I am still offering duty instead of passionate regret.

It was in this sacrificial frame of mind that I started out on All Saints' Day morning to cover my husband's grave with flowers. Old Allen, the Scotch gardener, followed, carrying two great baskets of golden-headed chrysanthemums, the flowers of Tom's special pride.

We had hardly finished our task in the churchyard before the sur-

pliced choir (little devils from the shanties about the railway station transmogrified into angels by their white gowns and hanging sleeves) came from the side door of the Sunday-school room and, eschewing the covered passage which led into the church, wound their way along the paths between the graves to the great west door. As they marched they sang some cherub hymn which ended in "Alleluia!" and as they faced the mountain behind the church the echo gave back the word.

I stood listening, my arms clasping the left-over flowers, my soul thrilled by the sensuous setting to this festival of the dead—all sunshine and high-set music. No dark church for me with its monotonous service. My pagan soul had received an impression, sharp and strong; I would carry it away with me through the soft November morning, through the dying glories of the trees and the haze of the atmosphere.

I had accomplished perhaps a quarter of a mile on my return tramp when I heard the clanging of a bell behind me, immediately followed by the thud of horses' feet advancing at a wild gallop, and then by shrill feminine screams blood-curdling in their terror. With a bound I reached the side of the road just as old Mrs. Tobin's carriage came reeling past, the coachman hatless and purple in the face through his frenzied efforts to check the frightened horses, and the old lady thrusting her head first out of one window and then the other in impartial distribution of her shrieks for help.

Meanwhile the cause of the commotion was slowly approaching at so moderate a pace that I could not but think Mrs. Tobin's horses were in search of a lark and took this opportunity to teach the old lady not to let her midday airing encroach upon their dinner-hour. It was an automobile of the French racing pattern, painted a lively green, with brass trimmings, and driven by a gentleman whose face was half concealed by goggles set in a mask of black silk. I have since heard that these goggles are much the mode among amateur chaffeurs and can be procured anywhere for the sum of eight dollars, but on that eventful day I thought they guarded the features of a twentieth-century Dick Turpin, and as the vehicle drew up beside me I quickly turned the stones of my rings towards my palms, for I had removed my gloves to facilitate my work in the churchyard and had never replaced them.

A charming voice addressed me, and the highwayman—a towering, great creature—stood, hat in hand, looking down at me through the goggles.

"You saw the runaway?" he began. "Would you be so kind as to give me the name of the owner of the carriage? I wish to make my apologies at causing such an unfortunate accident and to offer to furnish the lady's coachman with a new hat," and he pointed to a shapeless black object in the road which had just received its coup-de-grâce from the wheels of his carriage.

"You had better furnish old Mrs. Tobin with a set of new wits while you are about it," I answered saucily, "for you have frightened her well out of the few she possessed."

"Perhaps you would undertake that part of the commission for me," he suggested, with a tinge of impertinence in his tone. "They seem to grow under the shelter of feathers and lace rather than behind the counter of Dunlap's hat shop."

I felt I had brought this familiarity upon myself, but for that very reason I resented it the more.

"The lady's name," I said with dignity, "is Mrs. Tobin. She lives a mile from here in a place overlooking the river. You will recognize her gateway by a pair of Sphinxes guarding the entrance. I presume she is not injured, for I can see the carriage now mounting the hill in the distance, and the speed seems slow enough to reassure the most timid."

My manner was both reserved and gently condescending, and it had the desired effect. The next remark addressed to me was deferential.

"May I once more trespass upon your kindness and ask to be directed to Sans Gêne—Mr. Bird's place, you know?"

I gave the desired information, and he turned away murmuring something about writing to Mrs. Tobin, as her horses might object to a second encounter.

I was so entranced watching the effect of a carefully waxed mustache and very white teeth showing below the hideous disguise that I could hardly return the magnificent bow he made me by way of farewell. He sprang into his auto, and as he turned on the power the machine bounded ahead like a living dragon, leaving a trail of smoke and foul smell behind it which did much to enforce the impression.

It was not till he was far beyond recall that I remembered there was a culvert in process of construction across the road near my gate. Would the feeble barricade the workmen had put up as a guard be sufficient to attract his attention if he came tearing round the curve in my road at his present speed? I caught my breath and began to run. As well try to chase an ocean steamer in a rowboat! What headway could a pair of feminine legs make in overtaking a flying dragon with a fiery tail!

At the end of twenty minutes I reached the beginning of my privet hedge, and in five more the turn in the road revealed the trench, and there, turned over on its side, smashed, dirty, fireless, lay the green dragon!

What had become of the owner of the amazing toy and where were the workmen? The question was soon answered, for out of my entrance

gate the men streamed, talking volubly of the accident and of the gentleman they had just carried across the lawn to the shelter of my house.

I stopped the foreman and elicited some particulars. The automobile had come flying down the hill and round the turn in the road before the men could stop it and, crashing into the trench, had turned a complete somersault, landing on its side. The gentleman in goggles seemed very much injured, but his man, who had been thrown out on the soft turf, was not at all hurt. I rushed on over grass and flower-beds till I reached the piazza and then paused. Physical injury had always been peculiarly repulsive to me. I had to fight a battle with my nerves before I could turn the handle of the front door.

Rookwood is built in a crescent facing west and overlooking the river. A hall cuts the house in two, the northern half containing the drawing-room, dining-room, and kitchens beyond; the southern half a billiard-room, library, and bachelor's quarters, consisting of a bedroom and bath. It was there that I naturally expected to find my injured guest. But no—as I entered the house I found he had been deposited on the yellow damask of my drawing-room divan. I never sit on that divan now; it gives me a little shiver.

My servants were clustered in the hall, eager to be of service and yet afraid to intrude, for, in spite of his sufferings, the gentleman was dictating telegrams to his own man.

Catching sight of me, the man stood up and mentioned my presence to his master. I heard him say,—

"The lady, sir—Mrs. Eliot." Then, taking a step towards me, he asked, "Will you speak to Mr. Sinclair, Ma'am."

I came to the side of the divan and could have knelt through pity, he looked so wan and spent, and yet excited, as if braced to the limit of his endurance. His goggles had been lost in the crash, and for the first time I saw his face. He was beautiful in the short-nosed Greek type, the brow straight and finely modelled, the lips curved and rather full, while the line of the chin and jaw was almost perfect in its turn. He may have been thirty, but he looked younger. He seemed to me like some high-strung child meeting pain for the first time. "Somebody's spoilt darling," I thought, "capable of better things than he himself knows."

"I am sorry to be such a nuisance," he began, "to give so much trouble to a stranger——" Then as I faced the light he recognized me. "The lady of the wits," he said, smiling faintly. "I could wish you had lent me enough to keep me out of your ditch."

"I should have warned you," I said penitently. "I shall never forgive myself. What can I do to make you more comfortable?"

"You might give me some brandy," he suggested, "and then go away and give me a chance to vent my bad humor at Flinders here,"

and he smiled almost affectionately up at his servant, who was gently pushing a pillow under his wounded arm.

I saw the effort at control was taxing him to the utmost, for even as he spoke he grew deadly white, and I ran myself for the brandy.

I liked his manner to Flinders; it was the familiarity of the gentleman, not the parvenu, and it was plain to see that Flinders bore him a doglike devotion.

My servants had sent for the doctor before Mr. Sinclair had fairly reached the house, and his gig was even now drawing up at the door. I sent Jane, my old nurse, who still ruled me, to wait upon him, and withdrew to the upper floor. I fancied Doctor Gale would despise my services.

Never did so valiant a spirit live in so short a body as Jane's. She respected no one but her Creator, and little that He had made.

I never knew how Mr. Sinclair was moved from the drawing-room to the south bedroom, but I fancy by some strange power generated from Jane's *contradictionness* and Doctor Gale's energy; at any rate, at the end of half an hour Jane joined me.

"That gentleman will be spending the most of the winter here," she opined in a fateful voice, "or I *do be* entirely mistaken."

When Jane says "*I do be*" I know *she is*.

"What do you mean?" I asked fretfully.

"The man's broken his *hinchbone*," she explained, "and that's no flighty matter, let alone a sprained thumb and a dislocated wrist—but the hinchbone's the worst!"

"What is a hinchbone?" I asked stupidly, for the word did really explain itself.

"Sure, it's the hinge in his hip, what else could it be?" she said with scorn. "Sez I to the Doctor, 'Will it knit?' sez I. 'Twill, *in time*,' sez he. 'What time?' sez I. 'Barrin' nothin' onfavorable,' sez he, 'two months ought to do it, provided you lave him flat on his back with pound weights hung from the leg of him.' 'Doctor, dear,' sez I, 'we're goin' to New York to-morrow for sure; don't you see Mrs. Eliot's trunks packed and standin'? We only waited over All Saints' Day out of compliment to him that's gone, and the second of November has seen us in town these three years.' 'Well, it won't see you there this year,' sez he, right up to my face like that, 'so make me compliments to Mrs. Eliot and ask her to let me talk to her.'"

"How absurd!" I murmured under my breath. "Am I to turn my house into an infirmary for a stranger I never saw before, and then stay to see that he is made comfortable?"

I went downstairs to the Doctor in a mutinous frame of mind. What that man has been to me only those who have shared his ministrations can guess. He has been physician, friend, almost a father, and I love him!

"Well, Ladybird," he began, "you who know the Scriptures may have read of digging a pit for others and falling into the midst of it yourself. It seems to me that this accident has landed you in something of a hole. You have nearly killed a man, and now you can nurse him back to life."

"I nurse him!" I said loftily. "I will lend him my house, and his own people can take possession of him and it."

The Doctor shook his head.

"His people are abroad, his servant tells me, and Mrs. Sinclair is a great invalid. He seems to think the news of this accident will be a dangerous shock to her."

"Then he and his nurses can take possession," I persisted. "I will leave him my servants."

"How long would they behave with no head to rule them?" he asked impatiently. "No, Ladybird, here you stay to help repair the injury your carelessness has done to a fellow-creature."

I felt the color creeping into my cheeks, for I wished to present a personal point of view.

"I am a lonely woman," I began, "and young. Is it not, to say the least, unconventional to shut myself up for two months with a strange man? Would you like Lauretta to do it?"

He burst into a loud roar, partly scorn, partly laughter.

"Good God, child! What freak could have supplied your imagination with such a conjunction of ideas as Lauretta and a responsibility? Lauretta!" he went on with an angry splutter; "I wouldn't trust her with a sick cat. I do not know much about the usages of society—perhaps you may be criticised, but I thought a widow was a law to herself."

"Not when she is under the thumb of an autocratic old despot," I said crossly, knowing I had to yield and firing a last shot. "Give me my instructions," I added meekly.

"I have telephoned to town for McTorture, and he will be here by five o'clock with a nurse, and then together we will try to mend our broken gentleman. Put your dinner at seven, will you? and I will drive McTorture back to the station at eight. Now I must leave you. I have given Mr. Sinclair an opiate, and I wish you would sit with him and give him this second dose if he should wake."

"Can't his man sit with him?" I began.

"I've sent him to the village for the things I shall need from the apothecary," he answered shortly, and left me without another word.

Jane and the Doctor had managed to give my guest an appearance of comfort, though I knew the opiate only stood between him and misery. He was lying very flat on his narrow brass bed, covered warmly with blankets.

I had caught up some knitting, and I now sat beside him mechanically making my monotonous rows. His beauty was so remarkable that I found myself studying his face as I would some statue.

He moved uneasily and suddenly spoke.

"Did Flinders take those telegrams?" he asked in a faint voice, and then I lost two or three words and caught the end of the sentence, which was something about hating to have her see it first in the papers.

"You want Mrs. Sinclair to get your despatch about your accident before the reporters get hold of the news?"

He nodded and sighed.

"You would like her to be here now taking care of you?" I asked gently.

"It would make her happier," he answered.

"May I send her word that we are doing our best to supply her place?"

I fancied he might be grieving for this absent wife as Tom would have grieved for me if he had been lying helpless with the ocean between us. But Mr. Sinclair did not like the suggestion. He shook his head.

"You would frighten her," he said, and shut his eyes as if to end the conversation.

In a few minutes he opened them again.

"May I have a drink of water?" he asked submissively, like a little child.

I brought it, and slipping my hand under his head raised it enough to let him drink.

"Mrs. Sinclair could not have done better than that, could she?" I said cheerfully.

"She would have wiped my mouth," and his eyes smiled as he noted the omission.

I hastened to do as *she* would have done, but got no second smile; the last opiate was doing its work—he was drowsy.

As the clock struck five Doctor Gale's old surrey drew up at the door with the great man and a middle-aged nurse. Their requirements were few and easily supplied, and Jane was a skilful assistant in a sickroom. There was nothing for me to do and I felt the house oppressive. Throwing on my jacket and hat, I was about to fly out of the front door when Doctor Gale crossed the hall.

"That's right, Ladybird. Go and get some color in those pale cheeks. Surgery doesn't furnish pretty thoughts for ladies."

The word sounded ominous.

"Is it a very bad fracture? Do you have to hurt him?" I asked, growing faint, while the enormity of my workmen's sins paralyzed me.

"I do not know yet," he answered. "Perhaps there are complications beyond the ken of an old country doctor. Don't ask so many questions, Ladybird."

"You could have attended to him perfectly well yourself," I said rebelliously. "You are the cleverest and wisest man in the world. The only bright spot in this awful business was that it would have put some money in your pocket, and now you go and toss most of it into McTorture's well-stuffed grab-all! Catch me limning patients for you again."

"Don't joke, Ladybird. Take a long walk," and he pushed me out of the door and shut it gently.

Outside the west was all aglow with the reds of the setting sun. The river looked cold and purple, and the hills of the opposite side cut a sharp outline against the sky. It set my overwrought nerves shivering, this autumnal hardness in the coming night, and I turned my back on the river and walked down the avenue to the public road.

The automobile was righted and in process of being dragged to the lower stable by a pair of my farmhorses. Poor dragon, such an ignominious mode of progression for a thing of its fiery nature! The laborers had nearly filled in the trench and had hung little red lanterns across the part still unfinished. They were careful enough now that the mischief was done.

II.

I HARDLY knew where to walk at such a late hour, and finally decided I would go to Mrs. Tobin's and ask about the runaway. The place was next to mine and stood, from the Sphinxes on the gateposts to the footstools in the drawing-room, exactly as it was the day when the late Mr. Tobin led his Mathilda, a bride, to her home. A velvet carpet with a huge medallion in the centre covered the parlor floor, the furniture was upholstered in hard, bright blue reps, the tables were all marble-topped, and the walls had many mirrors in rosewood frames. From the chimney-breast Mr. Tobin, in a low collar and frock coat, glanced sourly down from his gilt frame on Mrs. Tobin and Lauretta sipping their tea beside the fire.

"I declare, my hands are trembling yet, Lauretta!" Mrs. Tobin was saying as the servant threw open the door of the drawing-room.

"Poor Mrs. Tobin!" I exclaimed. "What a fright you had!"

She groaned fretfully and rolled up her eyes.

"I saw you on the road," she complained. "You did not trouble yourself to make any effort to stop the horses, did you, Susan?"

This was too much. I was almost too cross to take the chair Lauretta wheeled for me close to her aunt.

"I almost stopped them with my dead body," I said. "Didn't you know you nearly ran over me?"

"I should think at least you might have picked up Thomas's hat before the wheels of that dreadful machine crushed it," she grumbled.

I assumed the task of peacemaker on behalf of my guest.

"The owner of the automobile stopped and spoke to me. He asked your address and expressed his regrets, and hoped he might be allowed to make good any damage resulting from the incident. He did not pursue you here for fear of frightening your horses again."

"I should think not!" she said with a sniff. "There ought to be a law passed prohibiting wild-cat locomotives on country roads. If a few accidents could happen to *them* instead of to ladies like you and I driving in our own carriages, it might abate the nuisance."

(Mrs. Tobin considered herself a purist in eschewing the pronoun *me*.)

"He has met his fate," I answered, with a lump in my throat as I thought of the helpless figure in my spare room. "His automobile was overturned in the road just beyond here and he was awfully hurt."

"Was he?" she said indifferently. "Between you and I, I think it served him right. Lauretta, ring for more cream. I don't see how you can take so much in your tea, Susan."

Lauretta crossed the room to pull the handle of the old-fashioned bell—no electric conveniences had invaded Tobin Towers. I glanced at her smart little figure and rosy face with something like envy. She was so entirely absorbed in herself, so healthy and young and tactless.

"Aunt Tilly was saying, Susan, that you were hardly neighborly to let the whole day pass without coming to ask about her."

I accepted the reproach in silence. I should not tell these selfish creatures of my share in the accident; let them find out for themselves. It seemed impossible to believe that my dear Doctor Gale, all intelligence and sympathy and skill, was the own brother of this stupid old yellow pussy-cat, sitting hunched by the fire, her five Assyrian curls thatching her receding forehead, and the bald spot on the top of her head only half-concealed by a braid of reddish hair.

"We haven't seen Uncle Doctor all day," said Lauretta as if in answer to my thoughts, only that I knew no subtle transfer of impressions could ever register in her material brain. "I went down to his house," she continued, "but Mrs. Wilcox was very non-committal as to where he was. I do hate housekeepers. They are not servants and they are not ladies, and you don't know how to treat them, and they certainly don't know how to treat you." And Lauretta shrugged her plump shoulders.

"He is taking care of the gentleman who was injured in the automobile," I confessed, fearing the anxiety might be real.

She looked puzzled for a moment and then said, "Oh!"

I thought of a funny old picture in one of the stained-glass windows of the village church—the Good Samaritan pouring a gushing stream of oil and wine all over a prostrate figure, while a red-frocked Levite, with his shape nicely defined by the high lights, is stamping off on the

other side. Lauretta's red house frock was equally defining. I wondered whether she fancied her uncle setting our wounded traveller-to-Jericho on his own beast and taking him home, or whether she pictured the poor creature still lying by the roadside under the November stars. Certainly she asked no questions, and she was the lady of all others who could ply them when the subject interested her. A look of animation flashed into her face.

"Have you heard," she began, "that the Birds are giving an enormous house party? They came up from town yesterday in the same train with Aunt Tilly and me."

"I, Lauretta," murmured Mrs. Tobin, "always say I."

"We had just been down for the day, you know. They had the Pryce girls and the Vanderveres and Mr. and Mrs. Reggy Forsythe—of all people for a house party; they are so in love with each other they can't look at anybody else—and Dicky Remsen and Charlie Johnstone and I forget who all, but they were behaving disgracefully. They bought packages of Huyler's candy and pelted each other with it, and Dicky got a glass of water and swore he would pour it over Bessie Pryce's feathers if she hit him again, and Mrs. Bird stole Charlie's stick and tripped up the train peddler with it just when he was staggering through the aisle with all the magazines, so that they flew in all directions. Charlie was awfully angry and told Mrs. Bird he was ashamed to be seen with them, but she only laughed. She may have been miffed though, for she did something awfully strange afterwards. You see, Aunt Tilly likes Charlie Johnstone's mother—they are old friends—and she wants me to see something of Charlie," and Lauretta dropped her eyes and looked conscious, "so as we were leaving the train she spoke to him."

"I just said," put in Mrs. Tobin, "that I hoped he would give Lauretta and I the pleasure of his company at dinner this evening, and I was going to ask the Rector and you, Susan."

"Well," resumed Lauretta, "he said he could not very well accept a dinner invitation when he was staying with Mrs. Bird, as he believed she had something going on every evening. Mrs. Bird was just behind him in the aisle of the car, and she called to Aunt Tilly, 'I'll give him up to you, Mrs. Tobin; did you say eight to-morrow evening? I'll see that he's punctual!' and I heard her say to him, 'That's one on you, my boy! Perhaps you won't try any more little games of keeping me in order.'"

"What did he say to that?" I asked, not knowing how much Lauretta understood of the insult to herself and Aunt Tilly.

"He said, 'Well, of all low-down tricks——' and then the train stopped and I could not hear the end of the sentence, but this morning we got a note from Mrs. Bird saying when she promised to give up Mr.

Johnstone she had forgotten he had a cold and had been ordered to stay in the house. Wasn't it horrid in her to try to give him more cold just in revenge and then pretend she had forgotten?"

"That was the explanation, was it?" I said, rising to go, while Mrs. Tobin bustled out of the room to fetch a book I had lent her and which she politely proposed returning to me by myself.

I tucked the recovered volume under my arm and plunged out into the night. As I called "good-by" to Lauretta, who was standing at the open door, I thought I saw a figure bound from the piazza to the lawn, but evidently she did not notice it, so I concluded it was the great Dane that they kept as a watch-dog.

"I'll leave the front door open till you get round the turn in the road," shouted Lauretta, who was always afraid of the dark.

I knew I heard a step on the other side of the hedge keeping pace with me and my heart beat fast, but I was ashamed to turn back. As I reached the turn in the road a low voice called, "Mrs. Eliot," and Charlie Johnstone made a capital spring over the hedge and landed at my side.

"What a time you have been," he began reproachfully. "I followed you here an hour ago, and I thought you never would come out."

"If you had had the manners to come in," I retorted, "I might have made my visit shorter."

"I go in!" he repeated. "Would you have me stultify myself? I am confined to the house with a cold."

"Oh! are you?" I said. "You are doing your best to turn the fib into reality, waiting in the chill evening air for an hour in that thin coat."

"You know I would do the same if the thermometer were zero for the pleasure of seeing you alone," he answered sentimentally. "Won't you be a little nice, just this once?"

"My dear boy," I answered, "please don't make love to me this evening. I am awfully low in my mind, and it's quite an effort to refuse you more than once a week in such a way that we may still remain good friends."

"Then don't refuse me," he began, but hearing an impatient sigh from me he quickly selected a safer topic—my low spirits. That is the advantage of boys, they are so easily repressed.

I liked his sympathy, and poured out a history of the day's horrors which lasted till we reached my door, and then Charlie had another relapse.

"I'd break both my legs to be nursed by you, Susan. What luck some fellows have!"

"Don't be a goose and don't call me Susan," I answered.

"Promise me not to get interested in this Sinclair," he entreated. "You know nothing about him; he may be an awful sort."

"He was on his way to stay with the Birds," I retorted.

"That's against him," snapped Charlie.

"Not as much against him as if he accepted their hospitality and then made nasty speeches," I answered.

"Oh! all right," he said. "Go your own way, and when you've got to like him perhaps you will find out he has a wife and children."

"I know that already," I answered, laughing; "at least, I know he has a wife."

"Thank Heaven!" said Charlie piously, and disappeared in the darkness.

How wonderful is this thing we call human attraction! Here is Charlie Johnstone, a good-looking, honest gentleman, with a fair share of humor and all the money he can spend, and I give him no second thought; and there is Mr. Sinclair, first seen behind disfiguring glasses, and then lying like a crushed worm on my divan, and my imagination cannot let him alone. His eyes and smile are always coming back to me. I am guessing at his feelings, at his past life. I am putting myself in the place of his poor wife and grieving for her grief, and for anything I know he may be quite unworthy her interest or mine.

III.

THINGS looked very unpromising for Mr. Sinclair when I got home. McTorture decided to stay for the night, and he and Doctor Gale were rarely out of the sickroom, but by the next day the bad symptoms had vanished and the great man went back to town. We soon settled down to our new duties, and it seemed to me as if Rookswood had always had a sick man to be considered and that our present life was to go on interminably.

The third day I was loitering over a late breakfast when Lauretta burst in upon me. She never waits to be invited to my bedroom or table, but always assumes that her company is agreeable.

"Well," she began, "so you have got the man who was hurt in his automobile staying here! Why didn't you tell us? Aunt Tilly says she thinks it's awfully improper; that a young widow's reputation is even more easily damaged than a girl's, and she thinks you ought to pack up and go away," and Lauretta pursed her mouth and looked primly pure.

"I wish," I said irritably, "you would learn not to repeat disagreeable things. I do not intend going away, and if Mrs. Tobin considers my reputation endangered she had better keep you at home."

"Is he good-looking, Susan?" she responded, perfectly unmoved by my crossness and seating herself at the table. "Do you always

have grapefruit for breakfast? Aunt Tilly says they are thirty-five cents apiece and too dear for her, but she says you know how to make poor Tom's money fly!"

"Lauretta!" I exclaimed, glaring at her, "be good enough to let my expenses alone, and never again dare to tell me what Mrs. Tobin says about me."

"I didn't mean to vex you," she said stupidly. "What is that cereal you are eating? It looks awfully good, and your cream is so much thicker than ours. Aunt Tilly says that our butter brings forty cents a pound and pays for the keep of the cows, but that you——"

"Lauretta," I interrupted, "you are going to do it again, and I tell you plainly I don't care what the cows cost."

"I suppose he's in the spare-room," irrelevantly responded my feather-brained visitor, and, of course, I knew she meant Mr. Sinclair, because cows are not *he's*. "Don't you think I might steal in through the library and peep at him. They keep his door half-open; I noticed it as I passed."

"Certainly not," I answered, turning my head to help myself to butter, and when I looked back she was gone.

Surely she would not be so bold as to pry into a man's bedroom? But that is just what she did, dancing back in a few minutes in a great state of excitement.

"I stole through the billiard-room and into the library, and the spare-room door was open with a screen before it, so I stuck my head just a little way round the screen and the nurse never saw me, but *he* did. He smiled, and oh! Susan, I believe he winked!" and she doubled herself up with delight. "And I shook him a by-bye and ran away. He is quite the handsomest creature I ever saw. My heart has gone forever. Give me that piece of roll you have just buttered, and oh! Susan, let me come every day."

"You are the most ill-behaved girl I ever knew," I said, thoroughly disgusted, "and I sincerely hope you will never cross this threshold till after Mr. Sinclair goes. What must he think of you? I have a great mind to tell Mrs. Tobin."

"You wouldn't be so ill-natured!" she responded. "Aunt Tilly does hate unladylike behavior. She says Mrs. Bird is a disgrace to the neighborhood, but she does think it strange she has not asked me to her dance Friday night as long as Charlie Johnstone is staying there. Not that she would let me go if I were asked, because she disapproves of the whole Bird set."

"An unsavory cageful," I agreed. "But please go home now, Lauretta, I have no more time to give you."

She reluctantly wriggled into her little, tight jacket and adjusted

a pin in her scarlet hat. She was never without a dash of red somewhere in her dress, and it was most becoming. She was certainly a pretty creature, so trim and rounded, and so sprightly in manner, with an underlying dulness which was never suspected on first acquaintance. Dull as she was, she must have understood that she was in my black books, for she let me alone for several days.

Towards the end of the week Jane pursued me to my bedroom one afternoon when I had just returned from town tired and hungry.

"The gentleman do be asking for you," she said. "I guess it's about gettin' some letters wrote."

"I thought Flinders wrote for him," I objected.

"The likes of *yous*," she explained, "is always kinder ashamed to show yer feelin's to the likes of us, so that maybe's why he wants you to write."

"Probably he wishes to write to Mrs. Sinclair," I said reflectively.

"Or the child," put in Jane.

"Is there a child?" I asked, with a vague feeling of regret which was too faint even for recognition.

"There is," said Jane, "a delicate scrapine of a thing, more trouble to raise than a canary-bird by what Flinders says. No one would believe she was Mr. Harry's child, he says. Sure it's on her account the mother keeps in Europe."

I gathered some writing materials and, telling Jane to order some tea for me, went to my guest. We had met several times since that eventful day when he had first taken possession of his present quarters, but my share of watching had usually been when he was asleep, or forbidden to excite himself by talking, and our intercourse had been confined to a study of each other's faces rather than any exchange of ideas.

Two bandaged hands lay on the coverlet, but the left one was in process of rapid recovery. He could use his fingers, and between the first and second was a lighted cigarette.

"Do you mind smoke?" he apologized. "I should not have lighted it if I had known you would come so soon," and he motioned to Flinders to take it away, but I saw regret in every feature.

"On the contrary," I said, "I like it. Give me one and I will keep you company," and I helped myself out of his case and struck a match in the most scientific manner.

There was vanity equal to Lauretta's in the action, for I hate smoking, but I enjoyed the shock I saw it gave him. I am naturally dignified, and my features of the pure, clear-cut, ethereal stamp. It was like levity in an angel and it puzzled him.

"Jane told me you had letters to write this afternoon. May I be your amanuensis?" I asked between my puffs.

"You are very kind," he answered, dismissing Flinders. "You see, Flinders and I do not always hit it off in the spelling. I do very well when I drive my own pen, but when he springs words on me I get all tangled up."

"I must not appeal to you then," I said, dipping my pen in the ink.

"Did you date it?" he asked anxiously. "Women never do."

"Rookwood, November 8," I read.

"Rookwood is not your postoffice," he objected.

I began to get cross.

"I just read that to satisfy you," I said. "The whole top of my paper is covered with addresses—post, telegraph, telephone—and I only had to add the date. I don't wonder that you fluster Flinders!"

"That's a good alliteration," he laughed. "Begin

"DEAR MOPSIE:"

I nodded.

"You are not to worry about me, for I am nearly well, though, as my cable told you, the automobile gave me a spill by trying to leap a ditch like the fool it is!"

"Perhaps it wasn't the automobile that was the fool," I suggested.

"Perhaps not," he agreed. "Politeness warns me not to try to fix the blame," and his eyes were laughing, though the words cut.

"Go on," I murmured.

"It happened this way. I was going lickerty split down a hill——"

"I don't know how to spell *lickerty split*," I interrupted. "Couldn't you be going some other way?"

"You said you would not appeal to me for spelling," he remonstrated; "besides, that was the way I was going.

"When suddenly in front of me, not fifty yards off, I saw an open trench across the road. I tried to slow down, but the brakes wouldn't work, and we sailed into it at the rate of forty miles an hour. Flinders fell on his head and naturally was unhurt, while I was landed under the confounded thing and found myself quite seriously shaken up. Not counting scratches, I have dislocated my right wrist and sprained my left thumb, so it will be some time before I shall be able to write to you myself."

Here I broke in.

"Aren't you going to tell about your hip?" I asked, amazed.

"When I get well, perhaps; I have told her enough to explain why I cannot write. Now I am going to tell her about you.

"Do not think of coming out to me, for I shall be all right before you could get here, and besides, as usual, I have fallen on my feet." ("I wonder how I did fall!" he soliloquized.) "The accident happened just outside the place where I am now staying. It belongs to Mrs. Thomas Eliot, and she is my most kind hostess. No words can—"

"I can't write all that trash about myself," I urged, but he frowned and continued in the same tone.

"No words can describe the debt of gratitude I owe her. She has turned her house into a hospital and sent for the best surgeon in New York to make sure I'm all right, while her own special Doctor—old Gale—is the nicest, cleverest old boy I ever came across, and between them I am having the time of my life.

"Give my love to Dolly and tell her she shall never be punished again by being sent to bed in the daytime—it is horrid!

"I confess I should like to see you both.

"Affectionately yours,

"HARRINGTON SINCLAIR."

"Now for the address," I suggested.

"Mrs. Sinclair," he began.

"No first name?" I asked.

"Oh, well!" he agreed, "perhaps it would be better.

"Mrs. HARRINGTON SINCLAIR,

"Palace Hotel,

"St. Moritz,

"Switzerland."

"Can I do anything else for you?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered, "talk to me. If you knew the weariness of lying here hour after hour you would not be so chary with your society. Once you brought your knitting. It was very pleasant—a sort of guarantee you meant to stay for some time."

"It seems rather an unusual thing to do," I began, getting pink.

"Ah," he said, "that is it! You have the impulse lent by pity and nullified by propriety—or is it prudence? You don't know me—I may be a bold, bad man—I have brought no credentials. You are willing to open the doors of your house to a stranger, but not the door to your intimacy. You are right; I respect your good sense. But"—and that charming smile I was beginning to know so well crept over his face—"suppose we get Mr. Bird to testify to my respectability (for he can—

not do much more, I was asked there in response to a letter of introduction from a mutual friend), would you feel any happier about me?"

"How can you attribute such unpleasant motives to me?" I asked. "After being thrown with you for ten minutes I knew all I needed to know—that you were a gentleman."

"Perhaps I have the attributes without the soul, but I should like to justify your good opinion. May I testify to my own character? I am not very good, but I have never done anything to be ashamed of. Also I can be what you might call 'pretty behaved,' and I will exercise the talent for all it is worth if you will sit with me."

I touched the bell and when Jane appeared sent for my knitting. Mr. Sinclair looked pleased. We talked of St. Moritz, where Mrs. Sinclair was spending the winter and which I knew so well. We talked of books till, like all modern novel readers, we fell to discussing Meredith and James. I confessed to a taste for James, which Mr. Sinclair declared unhealthy.

"There is something human about Meredith," he agreed. "Besides the vividness conveyed by those impressionist sentences of his, he gives you types of real men and women, eccentric, perhaps, but belonging to nature as well as civilization. With James and his following it is the dissection of the neurotic, interesting as a specialist's essay to those in search of psychological phenomena in effete overdevelopment, but a sealed book to the average reader."

"You would agree, then," I answered, "with a sentence I came across the other day in one of the evening papers—'Henry James has long ignored the considerations which move men in the mass, and now follows to their remotest implications the individual caprices of a sophisticated class of men and women.'"

"Admirably expressed!" he began, when the servant announced the tea Jane had ordered for me and, most unwillingly, I rose to go.

Mr. Sinclair held out a detaining hand.

"Please have your tea brought here and make me a cup. Women's hands are so charming when busied with a tea-tray, and, besides, I have not said half my say."

It was silly in me to smile, but I knew my hands were attractive. As for his say, it had to be indefinitely postponed, for, trotting in after the tea-tray, like a tame cat, came Lauretta, unasked, unexpected, and most unwelcome—that is, to me.

Mr. Sinclair seemed to feel otherwise. He begged for an introduction, declaring that her charming face had already visited his dreams, and that he found the reality even more bewitching. He stared boldly at Lauretta's pretty, smug countenance.

She ran behind the screen and peeped out at him as she had done that first day.

"Was that the dream?" she asked.

"The same!" with enthusiasm. "Only lovelier in this hat than it was in the other."

I had made his tea and was rising to give it to him when Lauretta took it from my hand.

"Let me," she persisted.

"You know I have to be fed," Mr. Sinclair suggested.

He was alternately the most deferential and the most impertinent of men. It took all my dignity at times to keep him in order, but as for Lauretta, I believe she likes familiarity. She drew a chair to his bedside and, tucking a napkin under his chin, fed him his tea as if she had been his trained nurse. Their jokes were endless, and she actually held his muffin for him to bite. By the time the tea was finished he had found out that the way to her favor lay through chocolates, and she, on her part, had promised him a photograph of herself in the hat he found so becoming. They were so absorbed in each other that I might have been miles away, and, distinctly, I did not like it. I took the opportunity to scribble a note that I had forgotten to answer till that moment.

Suddenly Lauretta remembered my existence. I was necessary to her schemes. She put down Mr. Sinclair's cup and came pirouetting over to me.

"Are you asked to the Birds' dance on Friday?" she asked.

"I am, and have declined," I said, pointing to the note I had just written and placed on the tray.

Lauretta clasped me round the neck.

"Susan dear, *please* accept; Aunt Tilly says I may go if you will chaperone me, and I never go anywhere, and I love to dance, and one is only young once, and I have such a pretty frock! It can't make much difference to you, and it would be such a pleasure to me."

I could have answered in her own words that I detested the whole Bird set, but Lauretta pleading for the pleasures of her age seemed to me pathetic. If I were shut up in Tobin Towers with Aunt Tilly as my sole companion, I might plead to be taken to the Birds' fandangoes.

"I will take you, Lauretta," I said, tearing up my note.

She capered round the room, coming back to kiss me every few seconds.

"I am asked to spend the night," she said. "Are you?"

"I draw the line there, Lauretta," I answered. "You can stay if you like, and Aunt Tilly permit it, but I shall come home."

The figure in bed moved uneasily.

"Are your roads safe at night?" he asked.

"I am not going in an automobile," I answered, with a kind of grim humor which discouraged him.

Lauretta, having achieved the object of her visit, bade us a reluctant farewell. She had the Tobin Towers landau and did not dare to keep the coachman waiting. The Autocrat of all the Russias isn't to be compared with the coachman of the rich dowager. His person, his horses, his bank account, and his insolence swell in unison.

Doctor Gales's pleasant voice reached us from the hall, speaking to his niece. I hastened to gather my belongings together in order to surrender my guest to his physician and nurse, but he stopped me as I passed his bed for a last word.

"Come again soon," he said almost timidly. "In time you might even convert me into a Jamesite. My mind is singularly open to conviction."

IV.

FRIDAY came, cold and crisp. My fire looked so inviting that I dreaded leaving it to fulfil my promise to Lauretta. To drive five miles over rough roads when your bed is beckoning to you seems almost too hard a fate. Jane had put out for me a white frock with black sashes. I had meant to wear black velvet, but she was firm.

"If Mr. Eliot was here," she said, "sure 'twould be himself would be pleased to see you actin' so reasonable."

Her words set my thoughts on a new trail, and I let her dress me as she liked.

Would Tom approve of all my conduct? Would he approve of my visitor downstairs, and the prominence I was allowing him to usurp in my thoughts? My outward deportment was exemplary, but how about my fancy? Was it quite as free as when this blue-eyed giant was carried across my threshold? "He is married," said conscience, and I, not even true to myself, answered, "Thank Heaven!"

At ten o'clock I drove to Tobin Towers for Lauretta, and then I was forced to go in and show my finery to Aunt Tilly. She didn't even thank me for chaperoning her niece, but said the way older people were ignored nowadays was disgraceful; that she would have taken Lauretta herself if she had been asked, and didn't I think her purple velvet was enough dress for anything?

I said to myself that purple velvet would make its own occasion.

The neighborhood was well represented at the Birds' and the dance in full swing when we arrived. Charlie Johnstone was standing near the staircase and at once begged for every dance and supper besides, so I made terms. If he would dance the cotillon with Lauretta I would be kind, otherwise I should give away all my dances. He reluctantly succumbed. I need not have bargained about my charge, as it turned out, for she was very pretty and well dressed,—Aunt Tilly was generous in such matters,—and she was quite the success of the evening.

As for me, I found myself so companionable to my host that I could

not shake him off, even when Charlie came to claim my promise. Mr. Bird wanted to talk about Mr. Sinclair, and I soon learned the little he knew about him. His friend B——, of the American legation in Paris, had written out to him to do all he could for Sinclair, who was an awfully good fellow. He was a Californian, but his family had lived abroad for twenty years, and he really knew little of New York except through the medium of the American colony in Paris. I said I believed he had a wife and child, and Mr. Bird thought it more than possible. California fortunes were not likely to go unexploited in France. Some clever French woman would be sure to have landed him for her daughter.

At supper Charlie Johnstone persuaded me to let him bring me something to the conservatory, where it was cool and quiet. It was more romantic than prudence could approve, but Charlie had been so amenable to my requests that I stretched a point to pleasure him. It was a mistake, like all concessions. He began promptly.

"Mrs. Eliot, I don't mean to tease, but don't you like me a little bit this evening?"

"Immensely!" I answered honestly.

"Dear Susan,"—here he got a lively pink,—“please be engaged to me for a week and see whether you don't like me better than you think.”

"I shall never marry again," I answered, "and I am hardly the person to lend myself to a farce."

As usual, contradiction irritated "mamma's only boy."

"I fancy you would give a different answer to the man in your spare-room if he had not provided himself with a wife before he met you. The neighborhood is ringing with gossip about your having him there, I can tell you."

"I wonder you are not ashamed to run about like a spaniel retrieving scandals," I said contemptuously.

"If I am a retriever," he said angrily, "I can lay some rather high game at your feet. How would you like to know that Sinclair's wife couldn't live with him?"

"I don't see how it concerns me," I answered, knowing well it was a lie, for had I not written to her myself?

"Doesn't it concern you to know that everyone is painting your conduct in the blackest colors?"

"They can paint me as black as the Devil," I said, losing patience, "but I am not going to change my name to Johnstone by way of white-wash."

"I shall never ask you again," he said, glaring at me like a sulky child.

"Heaven be praised!" I snapped.

How much farther these amenities might have proceeded I cannot tell, if approaching voices had not warned us that we might be overheard, and in a moment Mrs. Bird and Dicky Remsen strolled into the conservatory and sat down under our palm-tree on the other side. They could not have seen us, for Mrs. Bird was saying:

"No, Dicky, it doesn't give me a sensation to have you hold my hand, so you can just drop it, my boy. Not that I set up for much propriety; anyhow, I don't pose as an example to the neighborhood and then keep a man like Harrington Sinclair shut up in my house and never send word to his friends where he is?"

Charlie looked at me in malicious triumph, and I flushed in distress. There was some force in Mrs. Bird's strictures. I had known Mr. Sinclair was on his way to their house and I should have informed them at once. On the other hand, the accident was of public notoriety, and it would have been but a natural courtesy on Mr. Bird's part had he hastened to my house to offer his services in such an emergency, whereas, with the exception of calling now and then to inquire and leave a card, he had taken no notice of his expected guest. They were probably only too glad to have escaped such an interruption to their merrymaking as Mr. Sinclair's illness would have been, and I felt indignant at Mrs. Bird's misrepresentation of my conduct.

Without a word I left my seat under the palm-tree and joined Lauretta in the hall, where she was making a protracted supper in company with the Rector.

Charlie Johnstone followed in my wake, half ashamed at what had taken place, half pleased to have his warnings so promptly confirmed. He asked whether we should have our supper brought to Miss Gales's table, but I so plainly intimated that I could dispense with his company that he went off more deeply offended than ever before.

Youthful spirits are hard to quell; in spite of my quarrel with Charlie Johnstone and the censures of Mrs. Bird, I found myself looking forward to the cotillon with childish impatience. It was my first dance since my morning, and the music and gayety gave me true pleasure. My partner, an inoffensive young person staying in the house, had little of my society, for I was constantly being taken out, and Lauretta herself was not more light-minded than I.

The clock was striking four when the dance broke up with an old-fashioned jig, and I ran upstairs to the dressing-room with my white frock hanging in tatters about my feet. I was the last to leave, even the house party were going to their rooms.

The winter's morning had no thought of breaking; it was as dark as midnight when I stepped into the brougham to drive home. The Birds' long avenue was lighted with little colored lanterns hung from

the trees, and the road seemed quite gay until we passed the entrance and plunged into the night. Coachman and horses seemed of one mind in speeding to their beds, and we covered the first two miles in splendid style, but at the top of a hill which marked the halfway the carriage came to a standstill and the coachman called something to me which I could not hear through the shut window. As I opened the door to speak to him I saw a reflection in the sky behind us which could only come from a fire.

"It's at Mr. Bird's, Ma'am," Saunders assured me, and I ordered him to return with all expedition to the scene of the late festivities.

My fancy pictured all possible horrors,—Lauretta in danger and I responsible to Mrs. Tobin for her safety, or, at best, all the inmates of the fated house huddled on the lawn to watch their possessions licked up by the merry flames.

"Drive faster!" I shouted.

At the gate Saunders tried to reassure me. He declared the fire must be out, there was no light through the trees, but I could not be satisfied till I had seen and spoken with Lauretta.

The little lanterns had all gone out, and Saunders drove slowly and carefully in a way which maddened me. As we drew up at the front door the house was certainly in status quo, with no sign of confusion outside, only within the electric lights were still burning and shadows were whirling past the white drop-shades in the windows. In a moment I was in the hall, and what a scene met my eyes!

On a table in the middle of the ballroom sat Charlie Johnstone enthroned on the piano-stool. In his lap he held an enormous cake taken from the supper-table, while trailing past him two by two, that he might judge the merits of their performance, came the rest of the party doing a cakewalk.

Such a crazy crowd was never seen out of Bedlam; some were in furs and dressing-gowns, some in nightgowns and golf-capes, the men in pajamas and such upper garments as had first come to hand.

The musicians, fortunately for them, had left before the excitement of the fire, but a phonograph was furnishing the newest concert-hall airs with all the force of its nasal twang.

Lauretta led the procession with Mr. Bird. That gentleman had had quite as much of his own good cheer as he could carry, and threw an energy into the contortions of his dancing which would have been the despair of a true Sambo. He was dressed in checked pajamas and a dress-coat and had ornamented his head with a tall hat. Lauretta wore carriage boots and a pink silk petticoat, and over the lace frills of her nightgown fell a long fur tippet. Her lithe body was swayed backward till she looked as if she might lose her balance, and her feet in their great boots were making the most impossible steps to

the music. Her face was turned over one shoulder away from her partner, and her little hands were flapped in his direction as if to defend herself from the ardor of his pursuit.

Behind them came the others, leaping and bounding like kangaroos.

I may have been a spoilsport, but indignation with Lauretta swallowed up every other feeling—she, at least, had been decently brought up and should have respected herself.

"Lauretta," I cried, "I wish to speak to you."

"Oh Susan!" she exclaimed, coming to a standstill beside me, "I am having such fun. You see the chimney took fire and we thought the house was going too, so we all rushed out just as we were, and now we are celebrating our escape."

"Get your things on," I said. "I shall take you home," and approaching Mrs. Bird I offered as polite an excuse as I could frame on the spur of the moment. I said Mrs. Tobin would hear of the fire and be alarmed, and if Lauretta were taken home now it might spare the old lady much anxiety.

Mrs. Bird received my explanation with a broad grin.

"You find our frolic too much of a leg-dance," she said coarsely. "Your own amusements are hardly likely to err in this respect at present."

I presumed she was alluding to Mr. Sinclair's crippled condition, but I ignored the impertinence.

"I trust my amusements will not err in any direction," I said loftily, walking out of the ballroom.

Mr. Bird, who was without a partner owing to my interference, was forgiving enough to follow me into the hall and to press me to join him in a glass of champagne before once more braving the morning air, but I declined his hospitality, and as soon as Lauretta appeared I called for my carriage.

Shut up in the brougham I felt the full force of that young lady's resentment. She answered my questions in monosyllables or else sat in sulky silence.

"I am sorry to take you away if you were enjoying yourself," I began, "but really the fun was beyond decency."

"Beyond prudery," she sniffed.

I took no notice.

"I suppose," I went on, "you were all assembled in those wonderful costumes in response to an alarm of fire."

"Of course," she agreed testily.

"What set the chimney on fire?" I pursued.

"Servants," she answered.

"Burning the débris of cotillon favors?"

"I suppose so," sulkily.

"You must spend what remains of the night with me," I said cheerfully. "It would never do to ring them up at Tobin Towers at this hour."

"Our house is always open by six o'clock and it cannot be far from that now," she answered in her eagerness to escape from my company. "Our servants are not allowed to spend their mornings in bed, as Aunt Tilly says yours——"

"Thank you, Lauretta," I interrupted, "I do not care to hear Mrs. Tobin's views of my housekeeping. I will gladly take you home."

And the rest of the drive was accomplished in silence.

This question of chaperonage is a nice one. Is it to be treated as a concession to make-believe conventionality, a mere sinecure, or is it to be undertaken with some sense of responsibility? I should not have left my own young sister capering in *déshabille* in such riotous company, so why should I leave Lauretta?

At Tobin Towers a sleepy kitchenmaid responded to our ring, and I gave a gasp of relief as the door closed behind my indignant companion.

A faint streak of light was defining the hilltops to the east. Lights were glancing in the laborers' cottages. What a dissipated hour for a sober-minded woman to be returning from a ball!

One of the dearly purchased comforts of being your own mistress is the complete emancipation from solicitude. No one sits up for me, because I do not allow it. I have my latch-key and can ring for Jane when I need her.

As I opened my front door I was startled to see a figure rise from the nearest hall chair. It was Flinders.

"If you please, Ma'am, I am to let Mr. Sinclair know the moment you come in; he has been greatly worried about you for the last three hours."

Somebody anxious about my safety! was it pleasant or simply absurd? At any rate, I could not have resented it, for I explained at some length to Flinders the episode of the burning chimney and watched him cross the library on his way to his master's bedside with a feeling of gladness. After all, then, it is agreeable to know that there is someone "to mark your coming." I balanced the fact against my prized freedom, and the scale tipped towards the side of fetters. We women are a foolish sisterhood, clamoring for independence and forever forging our own chains.

V.

THE improvement in my invalid was rapid from the surgeons' point of view, but in their desire for a perfect cure the rules had never been relaxed. There he lay, the weights hanging from the broken

leg, as helpless as a baby except that his hands were once more serviceable.

What I had at first regarded as a concession on my part soon became a daily habit, and I now spent every afternoon in his room. I read aloud, we played piquet or cribbage, and, most dangerous of all, we talked.

He rarely spoke of his recent past. Sometimes he talked of his schooldays in France and the strange companions he had had—semi-royalties who hated to be clean; a duke's son who purloined a piece of his mother's jewelry and pawned it to treat the school to cakes; the hero of the playground, a handsome, generous boy whose word was law, and who left suddenly when it became known his father was the most celebrated forger in France. Later he told me how he had gone back to California for his university course and how true an American he was in all his sympathies. He admired his countrymen—he called them broad-minded, generous, dependable, hardworking. This was the land of all others, he declared, where ability and character combined always brought a man to the top, the land where the political ground felt firm under your feet, no matter what importations of disorder and anarchy might agitate the nation for a brief moment, for behind that element was always the steady common-sense of the great American people.

He used to grow so excited when this was his theme that the weights from his leg fairly rattled.

At last, one day, when I had listened for half an hour to a most graphic account of his father's life in California, his marvellous luck (which according to his son was no luck, but the natural outcome of genius and judgment) and of all they owed to this country, I could curb my tongue no longer, and burst out with,—

"Then why under the sun do you not live in the land you value, instead of being that most contemptible of creatures, a man without a country?"

"What else did you suppose I came here for?" he asked. "I am due in San Francisco on the first of January to take my brother's place in the banking-house. One of us is always there; the other usually looks after the family abroad."

It was the first I knew of this brother.

"Is your brother married?" I asked, forgetting in my interest the rudeness of searching questions.

"He has been," he answered shortly, and I thought I had fallen in his estimation through my intrusive curiosity. I hastened to change the subject.

"Surely you will not be able to make the journey to the Pacific as soon as the holidays," I remonstrated, and my heart sank as I waited for his reply.

He was enough of a Yankee to answer my question by another.

"Shall you miss me?" he asked, gazing into my eyes as if existence depended upon what he saw there.

"Do you think the prospect of being thrown back on Jane's company a lively one?" I said, pursuing his interrogatory methods.

"And yet, according to Jane," he said, with a sigh, "you value your solitude; you don't like to be taken out of the past; you prefer eating your own heart in silence."

Ah, so I did! but it was a heart which beat for him instead of the past. So this was his idea of me? Jane had done me a service with her loquacity. She had given him an impression of my faithfulness to Tom's memory which, however far from the truth, would serve as a blind to his ever guessing the depths of my present folly. I wondered what else she had confided of my history during her long hours of watching, but I was too proud to ask him, and while I meant to call her to an account, I could not bring myself to question her.

Sometimes I imagined he cared for me as I did for him—a hopeless, silent love, whose truest homage was in suppression. Sometimes I thought he was on the very verge of a declaration, which I should have to treat as an insult. He had been brought up in the land where married lovers hardly shock the moral sense.

I was so lost in my reverie that I fairly jumped when he spoke again.

"What an awful upsetting I must have made in your life," he lamented, "and all the time I have been so happy. I wish I could think you had been a little happy too."

I pulled myself together with an effort and answered guardedly,—

"Pray do not misunderstand me when I say your companionship has been delightful to me."

"I'm not likely to misunderstand," he said bitterly. "You surround yourself with a sufficiently chilling atmosphere."

A silence fell between us. He was evidently making up his mind to say something he found difficult. Presently it came.

"I ought to tell you that at last I have written abroad the whole truth about my accident. Now," he murmured, half to himself, "if Mopsie chooses to come it can make little difference, for by the time she is here I should have to be going at any rate. I have behaved disgracefully in billeting myself upon you for this long illness and concealing the facts from my people, but at first I did it to save them from the shock, and then, each day made my life here more precious to me, till I could not, by my own act, put an end to my happiness." Again his eyes sought my face, and finding mine averted he added: "At last shame drove me to it. I have sacrificed the joy of my present to duty, because I thought you would approve."

"I don't see what there is to sacrifice," I said coldly. "Mrs. Sinclair's coming could make no difference except to give you two companions instead of one."

"Ah! you don't know her," he urged. "She has grand qualities—there is something better than affection between us, there is friendship. She shares my tastes, she is almost masculine in her conception of a man's requirements—but she wants to be first with those she loves; she never shares her empire."

"No one expects her to share it," I said haughtily.

"Yes, but it is no longer hers as far as I am concerned," he said, with that look of boyish sweetness in his face that made him irresistible.

How did he dare say these things with that look of innocence? I started to my feet in a frenzy of love and indignation. First he sings the perfections of his wife, then he intimates the wrong I have done their conjugal relations.

"Never again allude to this subject," I said imperiously. "We will talk books and politics for the few weeks we are to be together, but of ourselves, not a word."

"I am at your orders," he said, but he looked unhappy.

Such conversations were not good for me; they preyed upon my spirits. The heart and conscience at variance is ever disturbing to the nerves. I lost my appetite and then my color; I started at every noise, and tears came all too easily.

Jane clucked over me like an old hen. She was always surprising me with what she called "pick-ups" at odd hours,—gruelly messes to *tempt* my appetite,—and finding I did not revive under that treatment, she went to town and brought me flannels which might have comforted an arctic explorer, but which I utterly repudiated.

"What good is there in thim flimsies of lace to kape the cowl'd out of your bones?" she demanded in scorn.

But the trouble lay deeper than gruel and flannel could reach.

At last my pale face aroused Doctor Gales's solicitude.

"Why, Ladybird," he said, "I shall have to take you in hand. You have been throwing your rouge-pots out of the window."

"Tallow-faced, like Juliet! Don't you like me pale?" I answered, laughing.

"I like you any way, but I think I have overestimated your strength. I should not have insisted upon giving you the anxiety of an invalid in your house, and yet in Tom's last illness you were my great dependence." He came to where I was standing by the fire and laid his fingers on my wrist. "Not very steady," was his comment.

How could it be steady when those searching gray eyes were making

gimlet-holes into my brain through which he might read the things I was hiding from myself?

"I'll give you a week to get well here," he went on, "and if at the end of that time I see no improvement, I shall send you and Jane to Bermuda."

"What will become of my house and your patient?" I asked, indignant at his proposal to spirit me away from the only spot on earth where I cared to be.

"My patient will have his weights off in a day or two, and by Christmas he can be up and away."

It was nearly the middle of December, so my happiness, like a little St. Martin's summer, was to be counted by days. All the doctors in the land should not make me go away. I would not lose a minute of this precious time. I could deceive as well as another—why not a dash of rouge and a little affected gayety? and the Doctor and Jane would find me myself again.

The gayety should begin at once.

"Do you know," I asked, "that I am out of favor at Tobin Towers? Lauretta has ignored my existence ever since I fetched her away from the Birds' dance two weeks ago."

He looked quizzical.

"It isn't so much that *you* are out of favor as that somebody else is *in*. Lauretta has a beau!"

I liked to hear him use the nice, old-fashioned word. It was so safe to mean much or little. Now for a guess.

"That is hardly a wonder for a pretty girl," I said. "Might his name be Johnstone?"

The Doctor winked solemnly.

"I haven't said so, have I?" he demanded.

"Mum's the word," I answered. "Is it serious?"

"He has been to drive alone with Mathilda in the landau with all the windows shut," he answered.

"Then it's an engagement for sure!" I cried, clapping my hands.

"I think you are a little premature as to conclusions, Ladybird, but I should say if the young gentleman is searching for his affinity in light-mindedness, our Lauretta would fill the bill for all time."

"Speak more kindly of your nephew-apparent," I returned; "he enjoys the privilege of my friendship."

"So I have heard," he said, laughing, "and that Lauretta caught him on the rebound. In order to rebound a fellow has to be bounced, I believe! How is that for slang, Ladybird?"

"It doesn't suit your beautiful white hair," I answered.

"Ah, well, I must be going," he said, picking up his hat. "You need more fresh air, my child. Begin riding again. I haven't seen

you on horseback since our patient came here. If the exercise exhausts you, try driving twice a day."

All men seem to hold women's time at no account,—indeed, I can go a step further and say that any employment they offer us they seem to consider as great a boon as occupation to a convict. In many cases a woman's duties are self-centred; her household cares may benefit none but herself if fate have left her alone in the world; her reading may have no result beyond individual culture; her charities may be mischievous in their outcome; but such as they are, her habits are formed upon them, and to be ordered to give up one's daylight hours to the pursuit of health is as upsetting as to order a business man on a yachting cruise.

I did not dare entirely to disregard the advice of my physician, but I did as little as I could.

One morning the following week I ordered my horse and went to my room to dress for the ride. My toilette had not proceeded very far when an impatient tap came at the door and Lauretta's voice demanded admittance. She never waits to hear your answer, but comes unless opposed by bolt and bar.

"How funny you look!" she remarked.

"If there is one place where you are entitled to look *funny* without exciting comment, it is in your own bedroom with the door shut," I answered; but I might have spared the rebuke, for her mind had already detached itself from my riding-boots and flown to her own concerns with the directness of a bird to its nest.

"Have you any engagement for Saturday evening?" she inquired. "Aunt Tilly means to give a dinner party if she can get enough people and she counts upon you, of course. We are to have Mr. Johnstone with us over Sunday, and we want to do something to amuse him."

"I fancy he would be better amused by a tête-à-tête with you while Aunt Tilly takes her forty winks," I ventured.

Lauretta looked pleased and self-conscious. She began a long account of recent events in which Mr. Johnstone's name marked every incident, and I saw the truth of Doctor Gale's statement that resentment had little to do with her neglect of me.

She and Aunt Tilly had been in New York for a week, ostensibly on account of visits to the dentist, but from the nature of the amusements they had patronized Mr. Johnstone must have been an important factor in their arrangements. Still, poor Mrs. Tobin had been in dental toils. Her whole glistening façade had become unsteady owing to the unreliable disposition of two structural supports. As Jane would say, too much *distress* on the first molars made a whole gum-set imperative.

I begged Lauretta to bring Mr. Johnstone to lunch with me on the important Saturday, but she hesitated. She said he was so particular about what a lady could do that he might object to her being thrown with Mr. Sinclair, "of whom we really know nothing," she concluded, shrugging her shoulders and looking propriety.

"Are you engaged to Mr. Johnstone, Lauretta, that he ventures to direct your conduct?" I asked, amazed.

"No," she said hesitatingly, "but Aunt Tilly consults him about a great many points, and when I happened to say that you received all your friends in the library whom you thought likely to amuse Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Johnstone said it was a pity you laid yourself open to such widespread comment, and he advised me to confine my visits here to the morning hours, when Mr. Sinclair kept his room."

My guest had just been promoted to a wheeled-chair and gave me his company at lunch and dinner. The pleasure would have been greater had not every improvement in his condition reminded me how near was the time of his departure.

Lauretta's frankness had no longer the power to irritate me; I answered quite pleasantly,—

"In case Mr. Johnstone should feel inclined to lunch with Mr. Sinclair and me, I shall be very glad to see you both on Saturday at one o'clock."

Could human meekness go further.

Lauretta promised to let me know what the great autocrat felt about the danger of associating with me and departed. In a second she darted back.

"Aunt Tilly says you are to wear your best clothes on Saturday. She has noticed you think anything good enough for Steeplands, and it is a poor compliment to your hostess."

"It is the purple velvet," I commented silently to myself; "her guests have to be fine enough to justify its magnificence."

Again I returned the soft answer.

"I will do my best, and hang myself over with jewels like a Begum."

VI.

THE day before Mrs. Tobin's dinner party I spent in town shopping for Christmas, and returned late in the afternoon laden with packages. My appearance suggested the true suburban lady, a cross between the packhorse and the peddler.

The carriage was waiting for me at the station, and seeing Charlie Johnstone unsuccessfully searching for a conveyance to take him to Tobin Towers I offered to give him a lift. He seemed embarrassed—not to say sheepish—at my invitation, but a cold night stirs one's inclinations towards a comfortable brougham with hot-water tins and

fur rugs, and he was finally persuaded to give me his company for the two-mile drive. If he had refused, he would have had his own company for a two-mile walk, for I saw the last hack disappearing as we stepped into the carriage.

I had wanted an opportunity to talk with him for some time, and I made the best of my chance. I began by playfully reproaching him for his neglect of me, and then I hinted at his attentions to Lauretta as a thing he ought to have confided to so old a friend. I said that what he had always valued in me was my elder-sisterly attitude, only he didn't quite understand himself. His hostility began to melt as he found me disposed to accept the transference of his affections with equanimity. I fancy he had expected me to be sarcastic, and sarcasm was a weapon he greatly feared. Lauretta's direct methods would never puzzle him; the two were admirably suited to each other. He was not ready as yet to acknowledge his admiration for her, but it pleased him to hear it recognized by me. He was the modern Ahasuerus deposing the contumacious Vashti from his heart's throne to make room for the more yielding charms of the new Queen.

When I had beguiled him into good-humor with himself I ventured upon the point of discourse.

"We have always been friends," I began, "even when you have resented my guarding the relation from losing its true character by forcing it to become something more. I want to ask you a plain question. Have you ever known me careless of my good name—undignified—frivolous in my conduct?"

He had the courage of his opinions, for he answered,—

"Not as I have hitherto known you, but you are making a mistake now."

"I am making no mistake, if my friends will stand by me," I answered hotly. "It is this I wished to speak to you about; you are doing me an incalculable mischief. If you and my neighbors find pleasure in circulating cruel innuendos, I am at your mercy! What lonely woman's character can stand the libel of close friends?"

I think he was ashamed, for he cleared his throat as if to speak and no words came, so I went on.

"Can't you believe I am simply carrying out Doctor Gales's wishes and the demands of compassion?"

Here he interrupted,—

"I tried to reason with you about your imprudence long ago, Mrs. Eliot, before gossip was busy with your name."

"And what could I have done?" I demanded,—"turn a wounded man into the roads, or give up my house and servants to the rule of strangers?"

"Give up your house, of course," he answered. "What stood in the way?"

"Doctor Gales's entreaty for one thing, and common-sense for another," I responded. "Be my friend, Charlie, and do your best to stop this gossip!" and I held out my hand.

"Ah Susan!" he said with a sigh, "I believe even now you can twist me about as you please, and my greatest pleasure is to serve you. I am sure you know what is due to yourself in actual word and deed, but it maddened me to see you putting yourself in an equivocal position. I do not know whether jealousy makes a man keen to see or whether it distorts his vision, but I believed your scorn of my advice was the result of this man's influence over you, whether you recognized it or not."

"Let us believe that as there is no longer any jealousy on your part, you were mistaken about there being any influence on his." I was going to add that at any rate I was unconscious of any, but the truth is dear to me, and I had stretched it to its limit. Lauretta was a safer topic of conversation. We were already passing through her Sphinx-guarded gates.

"My dear boy," I said, "will you promise to count on my services with your little lady-love to any extent?"

"I thought I was cured of caring for you," he murmured, "but a few more talks like this and I should have no little lady-love."

"Don't coquet with shadows," I answered. "Your fancy for me is an obstruction, getting between you and the sunshine. Your little friend cares for you and is suited to you in every way. Take the good things which come naturally, and among them take my friendship, which ought to be worth something, because it is sincere."

He seized my hand and kissed it.

"Shall I ask her this evening, Susan?" he said meekly.

"You will make her very happy, and, I honestly believe, yourself too," I answered.

We stopped at Tobin Towers, and there was no excuse to linger. Charlie left me with a sigh, and instead of ringing the bell he stood watching the carriage round the curve.

As I turned over our conversation in my mind I felt I might take to heart my own advice to him, "Don't coquet with shadows." Wasn't I sacrificing my peace of mind to a shadow—a love whose substance belonged to another woman?

"A lot of mischief is done by too much introspection," I said speciously, addressing the fur rug. "The New Year will find Mr. Sinclair on his way to California and Susan herself again."

"All the comforts of home" is a comprehensive phrase, meaning different things to different people. To me, that cold evening, it

meant a cup of tea by my bedroom fire, a dressing-gown and slippers, and Jane pottering about, laying out my frock for dinner and drawing my bath. If you haven't any mother to purr over you, a Jane is not to be despised. The unquestioning love of an old servant is as soothing as the dumb homage of a dog—yours through good report and evil.

I found her childish interest in my packages a welcome distraction from the irritation of some of Charlie Johnstone's home-truths. I had brought her a dozen dolls to dress for her church Christmas-tree, and I offered to bear a hand if she would bring me a few to the library after dinner.

"Don't be troublin' yourself, darlint," she said, "the cook will be helpin' me. I find her a real tasty body."

I acquiesced in Jane's cannibalistic estimate of the cook's value, but insisted that I should like to dress some of the dolls. Perhaps I was glad of an excuse to sit up late in company which was so soon to be taken from me.

Her talk ran upon long-ago Christmases and my childish beliefs till she put my dress over my head, and then her attention was directed to my appearance.

"Dearie," she said, "ain't you growed thin? I can fasten your skirthead right into the third eye. Do you feel any distress on that last hook?"

"Not on the hook, Jane," I answered with a sigh, and I went downstairs to face my real *distress*, who was waiting for me in the library, seated in his wheeled-chair in his immaculate evening dress. He was thin, and the shadows under his eyes too violet, but what a gentleman he looked! Such an air of distinction!

Tom's old staghound, a privileged character, was resting his head on his knee; the evening papers were piled beside him, but he was not reading; the open door commanded the staircase and his eyes were watching—for what? I thought I knew!

"A day without you is a day lost," he said as I came towards him.

There was tenderness in his voice. I was close to his chair, and he took my hand and raised it to his lips. I suppose I was tired and excited, for I shrank away from him with a little cry of dismay. He looked surprised, and I quickly recovered myself. I should have remembered how little significance a person brought up abroad attaches to the action. As usual, I had played the fool, but I was saved the embarrassment of an explanation by the announcement of dinner. Flinders came to wheel his master to the dining-room, and in the presence of servants our talk was of an impersonal nature.

Every topic my guest touched upon became of interest to me. He had the faculty of making what was difficult seem simple, and that

without boring me with explanations—it was in his mode of presentment. Tom had always talked down to me; there were fields of public interest, of experiment and invention, through which he roamed alone because my experience as a woman had not led me along his paths. It suited him to make me his idolized plaything rather than his companion. Often in married life gratitude and resentment go hand in hand, and it had been so with me. Tom starved my intellect. Mr. Sinclair fed and stimulated it at the same time.

When we were settled down for the evening by the library fire Jane came with her dolls and silks and laces. Her manner to me in company was a study in deference; her "*dearies*" and "*darlints*" were relegated to dressing time.

"Mrs. Eliot, Ma'am," she began, with a polite bow to Mr. Sinclair, "here bees the dolls, and some remlets of silk. Don't be takin' too much pains, Ma'am, but just sew their clothes right on to their bodies and tie a trinklet round their necks with a ribbon, and when they're strung up on the Christmas-tree, sure, no one will see any little outrage in your sewin'."

"You give me courage, Jane!" I said, dismissing her, and then I added to Mr. Sinclair, "She has the true scheme of modern life; if you hide the outrages in your conduct with silk and trinkets, the world won't challenge you; it is the straightforward people who are criticised."

He laughed.

"I have noticed a deplorable leaning towards pessimism in your philosophy lately. Has the world been treating you badly?"

I could not answer truly, for the truth would have driven him from the house, so I disclaimed harboring any grievance, and to change his ideas I set him to unpacking the dolls, while I measured and sewed with a speed which did more credit to my good-will than to my stitches. I had just triumphantly clothed a lady in scarlet with flounces of lace and a magnificent jewel hung from her neck when, on raising my eyes, I knew I should see Mr. Sinclair having an acrobatic performance with the undressed dolls. I knew it because I was conscious this had all happened before—that he and I had sat at this table amusing ourselves with these same toys, and I knew he was about to say,—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I beg to introduce to your notice the Jane family, the most accomplished acrobats on earth."

The words followed swift on my thought. I gave a gasp of excitement as I exclaimed:

"I feel as if we had lived through this scene in some pre-existence! I have seen you playing with your dolls before—I knew what you were going to say."

"Can't you make it prophetic?" he asked, smiling. "The past is

dead, but if I could believe I should be sitting here with you next Christmas, I could bless your premonitions."

"Tell me seriously," I said, "haven't you ever had that sensation of prescience, apart from memory, which makes you suspect the life of your spirit has been more varied than the life of your body? It is always in connection with something trivial."

"With me, for instance?" he said, highly amused; but seeing that I was in earnest he fell into my humor. "You mean that trick of the mind where you feel the scene before you to be the exact duplication of a previous experience? We are told its solution lies in the fact that the two hemispheres of the brain have failed to receive their impressions in perfect unison, and the infinitesimal lapse is noted, but not mentally understood."

"That does not account for my knowing what you were going to say," I objected.

"Ah! that was telepathy," he answered, fixing his laughing eyes on mine. "Make yourself a medium once more and read all the thoughts of my heart that you have forbidden me to speak."

"I might see what would pain me," I said.

"You would see many things which you guess but too well—three words embrace them all."

"Don't say them!" I cried impulsively, stretching out my hand as if to ward off a blow.

The gesture knocked down the topmost lady in his acrobatic pyramid. Down she came, striking her china head against the marble base of the inkstand and cracking her empty noddle in two.

"The hemispheres of *her* brain must have received a united impression," I said frivolously, in the hope of steering the conversation into safer channels.

But Mr. Sinclair did not respond. He was absently fitting the broken pieces of china together.

"You expect too much of me, Mrs. Eliot," he said, with a break in his voice. "There is a limit to repression."

"There must be none as between you and me," I answered firmly.

"And yet at times I could swear you like me," he persisted.

"We have only a week to be together," I said, putting aside his remark, "let it hold no regrets."

"Upon my word, I don't understand you!" he answered. And I didn't believe he did!

It was but another proof of how far apart were his standards and mine.

Fearing a renewal of the conversation, I rang for Jane, declaring that a day in town had made me too sleepy to dress any more dolls that night.

When she came Mr. Sinclair pointed to the broken doll.

"I have cracked this lady's skull," he said, "but I will mend it by a contribution to your Christmas-tree if you will bring me a leather notebook from my dressing-table."

"Shut Mr. Sinclair's window," I called after her, "I feel a draught."

In a moment she rushed back to us, panting with fright.

"I shut it on a man's hand," she gasped. "He was trying to get in—I know he was!"

"It was probably Flinders trying to shut it from the outside," Mr. Sinclair said reassuringly. "Will you see whether he is in the kitchen?"

"Oh Mr. Sinclair, dear, don't be askin' me," she pleaded. "I wouldn't cross that hall and thim passages for all the money in your wallet," and she laid it with shaking hands beside him. I had already rung for the butler, who stood at the door waiting.

"Jane thinks she has seen a man trying to break into the house through the spare-room window," I explained. "Telephone to the stable and get the men from there to go with you and make a thorough search of the grounds. Is Mr. Sinclair's man in the kitchen?"

It appeared he had been there all the evening, so the theory that it was he trying to shut the window from the outside was destroyed.

I began gathering up my work, but I had no intention of going upstairs until the men had returned to report.

Mr. Sinclair made his contribution to Jane as calmly as if nothing had happened. She received it like one in a dream. He opened the inner pocket of his notebook, and drawing out a miniature in a flat gold frame he laid it before me.

"I am glad," he said, "Jane's visitor did not help himself to this."

I forgot my fright in my interest in the portrait. At last, I thought, I am to see *her*, and I forced my unwilling eyes to scan the miniature. But the face was a replica of Mr. Sinclair's own, only a feminine replica, delicate and girlish, with the hair arranged closer to the head than it is worn at present.

"Your sister?" I asked, for the family likeness was unmistakable.

"My mother," he answered. "She died when I was a child. I have no sister."

"It is a very charming face," I said, holding it under the lamp-light, "with the same eyes and frank smile as her great Hercules of a son. How she must have wanted to stay with you, poor lady! I know of no sadder fate than to be taken from your dear ones when you know they need you."

A wave of emotion passed over me. I felt as if the girl in the por-

trait were asking something of me which I was withholding. A few moments ago I had been angry, or supposed myself so—now I was all gentleness.

"Promise to keep Flinders on your sofa to-night," I said, placing the picture in his hand. "Remember how helpless you are still, and do it to please me."

He glanced at his own long legs and laughed.

"I'm not exactly a boy," he said, "and my pistols have done me a good turn before now."

My scouting party returned to say they had found no traces of an intruder, though that was hardly strange, as the ground was frozen hard.

I kept waking up at intervals during the early part of the night, the agitations of the evening proving stronger than the fatigues of the day. Once I thought I heard a footstep outside my door, and opening it stealthily I saw Flinders solemnly patrolling the house. He didn't see me, for he was at the far end of his beat with his back turned, but I knew who had placed him there, and with a glow of gratitude I went back to my bed and slept till morning.



VII.

ELEVEN o'clock had struck when I waked up. It was one of those glorious winter days, clear as crystal, with a sharp west wind. Jane threw open my windows as I was about to leave the room and I stopped to enjoy a long draught of the fresh air; it was exhilarating, like champagne.

The week of cold weather had frozen over the river and the ice-boats were flying hither and thither, their white sails catching the sunlight and their gay pennons floating. Between me and the Hudson was only a stretch of lawn dotted with great, sad pine-trees. The property lay high above the level of the river, so that the railway on its bank was practically non-existent. To the south of the house lay the garden, planned with a formality which mocked the efforts of nature.

As I took in the details I called for my coat and hat, determined to brace my nerves by a quick walk, and bounding down the steps I made my way to the garden, wishing to see the progress of some repairs I was making to the roof of the greenhouse.

Coming upon its broad walks from a screen of arbor-vitæ hedge, I nearly fell over Mr. Sinclair, who was approaching me in his chair, wheeled by the untiring Flinders. It was his first outing, and I hastened to offer my congratulations.

I felt wickedly happy. His silent care of me the night before had given me keenest pleasure. I was a lonely creature, and childish in

spite of an assumed gravity of manner, and I missed the shelter of a protecting love such as Tom had given. If Mr. Sinclair had had the right to win my affections, he could not have chosen a way more likely to touch me.

His indifference to the cold was surprising. A woman housed for seven weeks would be wrapped in furs and tied up with veils on the occasion of her first outing, but my invalid, while he had thrown a rug over his legs, had only supplemented his house-dress by an ordinary summer overcoat, and was enjoying his cigarette in the sharp wind as if a May sun were streaming down upon him.

Walking beside his chair I traversed all the garden alleys, and finding him interested in my hobby, I made the beds glow with summer flowers. That little bank against the sunny side of the greenhouse was the first to wake up in the spring—crocuses, lilac and white and yellow, were in bloom almost as soon as their little, pointed noses broke through the ground. Then came the daffodils and tulips, over there in those beds by the sundial, and I was just going to make an expanse of black mould burst into a blush of pink peonies when Lauretta and Charlie Johnstone joined us from behind the grapery.

Charlie had one arm thrust through the handle of a basket and his hands in his pocket to keep them warm. He looked important, but at the same time rather cast down.

Lauretta seemed radiantly happy, and it was a happiness which lifted her above her usual kittenish deportment.

I knew the truth the moment my eyes lit upon them, and wondered whether she would tell me. After the usual greetings she gave me the opportunity of seeing her alone.

"Susan," she said, "Aunt Tilly begs some flowers for the table to-night; our roses are doing so poorly this winter."

"Come," I said, "we shall find Allen somewhere in the greenhouses. We may leave Mr. Johnstone to explain the iceboats to Mr. Sinclair."

Charlie looked a shade more dismal, but acquiesced.

When we were shut in among the palms Lauretta flung herself into my arms.

"Can you guess, Susan?" she asked.

"Naturally, my dear, for I have seen it coming," I answered, "and I am as happy as if you were my own little sister."

She rubbed her cheek against mine and tears stood in her eyes.

"He says I can make him happy, but that he has been through awful trials and disappointments, and if I find him world-weary and morose at times I must bear with him, and by and by my love and fresh young spirits will charm him back to happiness. What do you suppose his trials have been, Susan?" she asked anxiously.

"Fluctuations in his securities and vexation with his mother because she wouldn't let him go into the army," I answered so glibly that I feared the father of lies must be lurking at my elbow.

It was abominable in Charlie to throw a shadow over the child's happiness with his absurd posing. As long as he meant to marry her, why couldn't he do it handsomely? I determined to let him know my views later.

"Did it happen last evening?" I asked.

"Just when you said it would," she responded, "when Aunt Tilly was asleep after dinner,—and, Susan, I wish Aunt Tilly were a little more collected when she wakes up. She called out suddenly that if Thomas's wife had any more babies, instead of advancing his wages five dollars for every child, she meant to cut them down. Now, I'm not squeamish, but——"

At this point old Allen presented himself, and he and Lauretta were so busy choosing blossoms that I left them and wandered back into the garden.

Mr. Sinclair had gone to see his automobile, which had been thoroughly resuscitated and was fit to ravage the country with the best of them.

Charlie was walking up and down by himself.

"I congratulate you," I said.

He cast a gloomy glance at me and drew in his breath.

"I don't think you are behaving very nicely," I said. "You have asked a girl you sincerely like to marry you and you know she adores you, and yet you are willing to let her see that you are less happy than she. Where is your chivalry?"

"I consider marriage a subject for grave reflection," he answered.

"Reflect when you are alone," I laughed, "but when you are with her do try to be '*someways gay*,' as Jane would say."

A sigh was his only answer, but my words had some effect, for when Lauretta joined us he begged a buttonhole from her basket and gallantly kissed the little fingers which pinned it in place.

"Till eight this evening," cried Lauretta, waving good-by, and I answered,—

"I shall be very gorgeous to please Aunt Tilly."

I resolved to dress early, so as to sit with Mr. Sinclair through part of his dinner, as we dined at Rookwood half an hour earlier than the hour set by Mrs. Tobin for her entertainment. I decided to wear black net, but it was so worked over with silver and shimmering with paillettes that it was more effective than the most brilliant color. Jane sewed jewels thickly on my bodice and I wore a diamond collar, a diamond tiara, and a string of pearls which reached to my waist. If I had

owned anything more I should have put it on somewhere without respect to suitableness, just to please Mrs. Tobin.

I sent Jane on an errand and rouged my pale cheeks while she was gone, and I liked the effect. Would Mr. Sinclair like it too?

He was already enjoying his soup when I joined him, and the vision could not have been disappointing, for he gave his chair a shove which brought him facing me, so that he could take in my full effect, while he exclaimed,—

“You are simply stunning, most beautiful lady!” and then he flushed as if the surprise had agitated him.

I wondered whether he had never found me handsome before. For so virile a person he had very little control of his complexion—but then he was still an invalid, and bodily weakness plays strange pranks with the strongest.

The servant had been out of the room during my entrance; he now reappeared, drew out my chair for me, and solemnly returned Mr. Sinclair to his soup. It was as if we were two badly behaved children at nursery tea being brought to a sense of our shortcomings.

Mr. Sinclair’s eyes wandered over my jewels with a troubled look, and he ventured to express the hope that I meant to take two men on the box when I drove to Tobin Towers.

“Of course not,” I answered. “Who is going to molest me here in the country? Jane’s bugaboo has made you nervous.”

He apparently acquiesced, but must have given secret orders when I went into the drawing-room for Jane to put on my wraps, for as I came out of the front door the ubiquitous Flinders was standing beside the carriage, and having put me in he promptly mounted the box beside the coachman.

I need hardly mention that we met nothing on the road,—not as much as a strange cat,—and I might have hung diamond necklaces around the horses’ necks with impunity as far as thieves were concerned; still, if Mr. Sinclair liked to take care of me, I did not find it in my heart to object.

I was the last to enter the drawing-room. Such a goodly company as I found assembled was rare for Steeplands in the winter, but Christmas was only two days off, and many of our neighbors had opened their houses for that week.

Aunt Tilly was easily queen of the ball. Her purple-velvet gown stretched for a yard over the carpet as she stood near the door receiving her guests. The skirt opened up the front just enough to reveal a white satin petticoat embroidered with a vine, on whose branches birds of paradise and passion-flowers were perched in impartial distribution. The low bodice was partly filled up with priceless lace, and sleeves of the same covered her arms to the elbows. Three lilac feathers, stuck in

what looked like a count's crown, surmounted her Assyrian curls, and her neck was in layers of wrinkles and diamond chains.

Lauretta, beautifully dressed, plump, pretty, and sprightly, was doing her duty among the guests. Charlie Johnstone had just been introduced by Mrs. Tobin to the great man of the neighborhood with so much ceremony that he might have mistrusted the good lady of having personal designs upon the young man.

As we filed out of the parlor on our way to dinner—a company of eighteen—I thought Mr. Tobin looked peculiarly revengeful from his frame. I wondered whether he regretted so much squandering of his money on the part of his Mathilda.

I was seated between the Rector and the great man, and very creditably did I talk parish with one and amateur farming with the other—Swiss cattle, ensilage, the comparative merits of Tamworth pigs as opposed to Berkshires—all such burning questions of expediency did we ponder with our fish and wash down with our champagne. Once during a pause in the conversation I heard the gentleman on Mrs. Tobin's left describing an attempt which had been made the night before to break into his house, and, indifferent alike to the claims of good manners and the farmyard, I leaned forward to listen.

"They forced the pantry window," he was saying, "and one of them must have cut himself, for there were bloody hand-prints over the white paint, and the strange part is the burglar must have lost a finger, as the left-hand mark always consisted in three fingers and a thumb."

A strange servant was in the act of handing me the terrapin. His fingers closed convulsively on the side of the dish and the contents were divided between the great man's shoulder and my gown. Mrs. Tobin's butler came to our relief, and we were scraped and mopped and the stranger's awkwardness excused in mumbled sentences by old Gilbert.

"I got him from the village to-day, Mum," he whispered in my ear, "and a poor selection he was, but Sherry only sent up three men when I needed four, and that was why I took him."

The accident had not surprised me, for as I turned to help myself to the terrapin I had noticed the hand that held the dish had lost a finger. Still, I could not disturb the harmony of the dinner upon the strength of a coincidence.

Aunt Tilly was shaking with fright.

"Mercy me! it would kill Lauretta and I if they came here," she was saying. "I can remember in Mr. Tobin's time that once we thought we heard a burglar, and he fired three shots out of the window and killed our neighbor's old white cow that had got loose and wandered into our place, and we had a suit brought against us for fifty dollars."

"You must not let this alarm you," the gentleman said reassuringly.

"I have sent to town for detectives and we are having the railway stations watched, so that a thief known to the police will have small chance to board a train."

I looked round the room to see whether the servant with the disfigured hand was within earshot, but he had not appeared since the terrapin incident. Probably Gilbert had set him tasks in the pantry more within his capacity; perhaps some of Uncle Tobin's spoons and forks were even now sliding down the thievish pockets. No wonder the poor gentleman looked so glum!

While the men were smoking and we women were sipping our coffee about the drawing-room fire like an admiring harem at Mr. Tobin's feet, Aunt Tilly retailed to us every word her neighbor had told her at dinner, which so fired the ladies that no one seemed to have been without a burglar experience of the most serious sort. At that moment the object of my suspicion entered with liqueurs on a tray. Most of us declined, but the wife of the great man having confessed to a weakness for green mint, Aunt Tilly's good manners induced her to keep her company in a glass. The servant's back was towards me as he handed the tray to Mrs. Tobin, but I could see that he stood very close to her, and I heard her say,—

"You have caught the foot of your tray in my lace; be careful or you will tear it."

It took a minute to disengage the silver claw from the frill of her corsage, and Aunt Tilly examined a hole rent in her beautiful lace with dismay. Suddenly she exclaimed,—

"My diamond star is gone!"

We all shook our dresses and searched under sofas and chairs, and Mrs. Tobin rang the bell for Gilbert and bade him look under the dining-room table.

I could doubt no longer.

"The thief is the servant who has just served the liqueurs," I said. "Gilbert, don't let him escape."

Gilbert hurriedly left the room, only to return with the intelligence that the man was nowhere in the house.

The gentlemen were summoned in consultation, and the victim of the night before undertook to drive at once to the village to interview his detective at our station. The absence of a telephone left Aunt Tilly rather stranded in the way of communication with the outside world.

One comfort was that the man must now feel himself so marked in the neighborhood that his one idea would be escape.

Poor Mrs. Tobin was so distressed at the loss of her star and the boldness of the outrage that we felt it would be cruel to keep her play-

ing hostess any longer than was necessary, so as the clock had already struck half-past ten we bade her good-night.

As Gilbert opened the hall door for me he made a small confidence.

"He's got a-holt of a lot of the small silver, but you'd advise my not telling Mrs. Tobin till morning, wouldn't you, Mum?"

I commended his prudence, though I feared the poor old lady was likely to pass a sleepless night from grief over the loss she already knew.

VIII.

It seemed so self-evident that a man marked by a physical defect and already associated with two burglaries should seek safety in flight that I never gave him a second thought beyond reproaching myself for concealing my suspicions till after he had escaped with Aunt Tilly's diamond star. I went to sleep with a feeling of responsibility towards the poor old soul which quite distressed me.

It could not have been much after one o'clock when I woke up with my heart racing. I am sure external impressions act directly on the nerve-centres without waiting to be communicated through the brain, for I was too sleepy to understand my own terror. The incidents of the evening flashed through my mind as I struggled back to consciousness, and I opened my eyes to see a dull light on my dressing-table and a man's figure bending over it. I kept perfectly still, but I verily believe he heard my heart beating, for he suddenly turned and our eyes met.

"Don't scream," he whispered, making a dash for my bed and pointing his pistol at me.

I tried to slip my hand quietly to the electric alarm, which hung near my pillow, but he detected the movement and ordered me to "drop it."

"Where are your jewels?" he asked, pressing his pistol against my temple.

"They are not in here," I answered as well as my trembling lips could frame the words.

"Speak soft," he cautioned. "Lies won't help you; speak the truth."

I plucked up my courage.

"You don't dare shoot," I said, "it would rouse the house."

"There are other ways of quieting blabs," he answered, and he raised his weapon as if he meant to strike me over the head.

He had a piece of a handkerchief over the upper half of his face with holes cut for the eyes, but I recognized the hand which held the lantern.

"I know about your jewels," he said; "get up and get them."

I lay perfectly still; I could not have moved if I had tried.

"I've got no time to fool," he whispered; "do as I tell you."

I really think I was fainting, for his words came to me as from a distance and they did not seem to matter. The next thing I remember was the awful sensation one has when regaining consciousness, with the added discomfort of a towel thrust into my mouth and my hands tied together. He was in the act of taking the lamp out of his lantern.

"We'll try a little persuading," he said, and touched my wrist with the flame.

I writhed away from him and he laughed. The fiendishness of his laugh and the sting of the burn made me furious. My strength came back with a bound, but he had me at his mercy.

"If I loose your hands, will you get the things?" he asked.

I nodded. After all, what did a few baubles matter? If I should succeed in getting help, it might only lead to some one losing their life for the sake of the stones.

He cut the twine and let my hands go, at the same time ordering me not to touch the gag in my mouth. I got out of bed and put on my dressing-gown and slippers—even in supreme moments habits assert themselves.

"Well, you're a cool hand!" he remarked. "You top-flyers beat the Dutch!"

I walked to my bureau drawer, took out the key to my little safe, and then opened the door of the next room, which had been a dressing-room and where the safe was built inside a closet.

The action excited his suspicions, for once more I felt the pistol close to my head, but my burglar was soon convinced of my sincerity, and together we approached the closet.

I unlocked the safe and drew out the little drawers with their sparkling contents. He thrust the different things into his pockets and seemed pretty well satisfied with his night's work, when suddenly his memory played me a shabby trick; Jane must have forgotten to put away my pearls, for they were not there, and he demanded them.

"I have heard," he said,—too prudent to admit he had *seen*,—"that you have pearls. Hand them over."

I spread out my hands to explain in dumb show that I did not know where they were.

"Come now," he said, "none of that!" and raising his revolver, he dealt me a blow on the shoulder that made me reel. At that instant a pistol-shot rang through the room and the man's arm dropped helpless by his side, while Mr. Sinclair wrenched his weapon from him and pitched him into a corner with as little effort as if he had been a kitten.

Could I believe my senses? I had supposed Mr. Sinclair unable to take a step, and here he was, limping but able-bodied, complete master of the situation.

He hardly glanced at the human heap in the corner, but tore away the bandage from my mouth and entreated me to assure him that I was unhurt. The hand he laid upon my shoulder was shaking with excitement and rage.

I truthfully answered that no bones were broken, and proceeded to give ocular proof of the same by dashing away from him at the top of my speed. I had seen the thief taking advantage of Mr. Sinclair's momentary thought of me to regain his feet, and he was just preparing to glide softly along the wall in the direction of my door.

I guessed his intention. It was probably the blast of icy air which guided me, but it seemed to me like instinct. I *knew* I should find the bathroom window open and a ladder resting against it. In a second I had crossed my bedroom and discovered just what I expected. For once my wits were quick. Seizing the ladder by its upright, I tossed it to the ground and turned to face the thief, who was close upon me.

It was my turn to laugh.

He cursed me with a savagery which was frightful, but he saw he was circumvented, and, weak from pain and loss of blood, he sank into a chair and resigned himself to his fate. The only outlet from the bathroom was the door by which we had entered, and that was already blocked by Mr. Sinclair and his pistol.

I set every bell in the house ringing, and in response collected a group of frightened servants nearly as bizarre in costume as Lauretta's friends in the cake-walk.

Jane was the first to arrive, with a down quilt billowing about her little person.

"Was you dreamin' of snakes or Indians, darlint?" she asked, running to me.

Twenty years ago I had suffered equally from their pursuit in the miseries of childish nightmare.

I pointed to the bathroom, where Mr. Sinclair was guarding his prisoner. Jane looked from him to me with blank unbelief.

"Did the Holy Saints give him wings that he *upped* the stairs with that poor leg of him?" she asked.

Here the butler and Flinders joined us and we held a council of war. We decided that Flinders should be dispatched in the automobile to summon the constable from the village and the New York detective if he could be found, and he was further instructed to pick up Doctor Gale on his way back, for humanity demanded that the burglar's arm should be attended to, and I, myself, was suffering acutely from the burn on my wrist, though, so far, I had been able to conceal the injury.

The constable, being a family man, preferred his own horse and wagon to the fiery risks of the automobile, but the town detective scorned such pusillanimity; in the hunting down of his professional

game he would have bestridden the back of a flesh-and-blood dragon if it would have engaged to get him first on the scene.

It was not till the excitement of the night was over, the stolen property recovered, the wounds dressed, and the burglar taken by his guardians to the county jail, that I heard Mr. Sinclair's part of the story. He and I were sitting with Doctor Gale in the library while the latter enjoyed a cup of hot coffee before braving the early morning air when I asked my guest to explain his timely arrival in the dressing-room.

He said that the night before Flinders had found under the window where Jane had surprised the man a burglar's tool, which from the delicacy of its make could only have belonged to a professional, and while they had not wished to alarm me, they had felt reasonably sure the man meant business. The first night he had kept Flinders on guard, and the second night he meant to watch himself, but he must have fallen into a doze. Some outside noise waked him and he quietly unbarred the inside shutters of his room and looked out. The stars were shining brilliantly, and he saw a ladder such as the men had been using to mend the roof of the greenhouse propped up against the window of the room above him. To get his pistols and put on some clothes took a few minutes, for his movements on a level floor were still difficult, but how to mount the staircase was much more of a puzzle. He finally straddled the banister, so that part of his weight should be supported, and by using his arms to drag himself and his good leg to take the steps he got silently to the top. He had at first chanced upon the wrong room, but on opening what afterwards proved to be my door he saw a light shining through from the dressing-room beyond, and came upon us just as the brute struck me with his pistol. Mr. Sinclair lost all control of himself and fired before he knew he was pulling the trigger. In my heart I was glad, for he must have been far too much exhausted to stand any chance in a hand-to-hand fight with that desperate rogue. Not that he seemed much exhausted when he slung the poor wretch into the corner! Still, when I considered that a week ago we looked upon his few steps about his room and his scramble in his wheeled chair as a grand advance, this performance seemed little short of a miracle. I feared it might have done him some injury, and I begged Doctor Gale not to go away without making sure that all was well. But he laughed at my misgivings.

"His muscles are like iron," he assured me. "You ought to see him sitting in the middle of his room smashing about like a blacksmith with those dumb-bells he uses."

"He may have injured his hip all the same," I persisted.

"He is a sound man, I tell you," the Doctor insisted, completely ignoring Mr. Sinclair's presence, "and that hip is every bit as good

as the other, and he can walk as well as anyone when he chooses!"—here I thought Doctor Gale looked a bit roguish. "All he needs now is to get rid of the stiffness and to find a strong motive to get well. Why, in a fortnight I'll give him leave to walk from here to San Francisco."

I thought Mr. Sinclair looked annoyed. Did he too suspect a lurking innuendo in the Doctor's speech—a hint that he had been willing to prolong convalescence? Well, and if he had, whose business was it but his and mine and perhaps Mrs. Sinclair's? These old country doctors need polish.

The lamps were burning low; it was nearly daylight. I lit a pair of candles, hoping the Doctor would take note of the time and go home, as long as his professional duties were over. I wanted one word alone with Mr. Sinclair, one word of thanks for what he had done for me; but my old friend had his own plans. He poured out a second cup of coffee and waved the nose of the cream-jug in the direction of the stairs while he addressed me.

"Go to bed, Ladybird, and when you are nicely tucked in send Jane down for me and I shall give you a sleeping-draught which will keep your nerves quiet till dinner-time to-morrow."

"I cannot spare the time," I objected. "It is the day before Christmas, and I have a thousand things to do."

"At what age do women learn obedience?" he asked with a stony stare.

"From their cradles, Heaven help them!" I answered, knowing I might as well submit.

When I got to the door I fired a parting shot.

"Among domestic tyrants," I said, "the family physician holds the palm!"

IX.

HE knew better than I, dear Doctor Gale, for when I awoke late in the afternoon I was simply good for nothing. My wrist too was painful, and I gladly followed Jane's suggestion of having toast and tea by my bedroom fire instead of dressing and going down to dinner. This quiescence on my part was the strongest proof of collapsed nerves I could have given, for I had never thanked Mr. Sinclair as I accounted thanks (i.e., with emotion), and I was wasting these precious last days of his sojourn at Rookwood.

At about seven o'clock—the time when he usually came to the library to read the evening papers before dinner—I sent Jane down with a note. Perhaps it said less than was necessary, though it seemed to me a model of grateful propriety. However, the appropriateness of a letter lies chiefly in the mood of him that reads. She brought me back an answer:

The Green Dragon

"Didn't somebody, historically famous, say of himself that his letters were powerful, but his bodily presence weak and his speech contemptible? Well, it's just the reverse with you. Your bodily presence is adorable, your speech bewitching, but your letters are like an old maid's sermon. I repudiate them. Get well and come downstairs, for my days are numbered. Mopsie has arrived in New York—in secret, for fear a cable from me might have stopped her—and I fancy she will be here to-morrow. Will it be convenient for you to receive her?"

The telegram from Mrs. Sinclair was enclosed. It said:

"I am here at the Albemarle, and shall join you the moment I have recovered from the severity of the voyage.

"M. H. S."

I sent back a line to this ardent husband:

"I shall telegraph to Mrs. Sinclair this evening to ask her to make this house her headquarters while she is in America."

His answer read:

"MY DEAR LADY: You are too kind!

"H. S."

Now, what did he mean! Was he literal or simply enthusiastic? Was I too kind to be satisfactory to him, or was I kind in a very great degree?

I hope he spent a wretched evening. I know I did, but I felt myself exemplary in conduct, and that was supporting.

There were no excitements that Christmas vigil. The household, worn out by the agitations of the night before, slept profoundly, but I, having exhausted my sleeping powers during the day, heard the clock strike every hour, and, like the Psalmist, I could have roared for the very disquietness of my heart. Again and again I examined my conduct, and while outwardly it was irreproachable, inwardly it was weak and culpable. Worse than all, I feared my infatuation was no longer my own horrid secret. Doctor Gale had been very peculiar in his manner the night before, as if, feeling himself responsible for bringing me into temptation, he was doing his best to protect me. When the mind transforms itself into a turnspit, its poor little legs give out at last. Towards morning I slept, and when I awoke I had barely time to dress for church.

Having swallowed a cup of coffee, I was hurrying out of the house when I met Flinders.

"Tell Mr. Sinclair," I said, "that the carriage will take me to

church, and then await his orders in case he should wish to send to the station for Mrs. Sinclair."

He had orders to go for Mrs. Sinclair in the automobile, he informed me.

"Then you know she is coming. Mr. Sinclair has heard definitely?" I asked.

"At noon, Ma'am."

"Won't she be afraid to use the automobile?" I asked, knowing my own terrors.

"Not if Mr. Sinclair desires that she should," he answered, as if that settled the matter.

This was too much submission to suit my taste. I judged the lady to be rather a poor creature, and yet such an estimate accorded ill with Mr. Sinclair's description. He said she shared her empire with no one. Ah, well! I should know soon.

I found the Christmas services very soothing to my rasped spirit, and at the end I loitered down the aisle admiring the church, more beautiful than ever in its greenery, and (to say the truth) I was not unwilling to escape the chatter of empty greetings. Aunt Tilly and the Rector were waiting for me, however. The clerical toilet is quickly made, it is like an immortal putting on mortality to see your spiritual guide one moment in surplice and stole and embroidery and the next in a fur-lined overcoat and dogskin gloves. He was in attendance upon Mrs. Tobin, with whom he had promised to lunch. She put her arm in mine.

"Isn't it a good thing my diamond star is safe?" she burst out in the gratitude of an overflowing heart. "If it hadn't have been found I declare I could not have looked at that Star-in-the-East hanging from the chancel arch. It would have seemed like a mockery!"

The Rector was on my other side.

"There's encouragement for symbolism!" I said.

He tried to look shocked, but a sense of the ludicrous saved him.

"I wish you would have your people hunt about your grounds where my silver was found; a dessert fork and a salt spoon are missing." Here she turned to the Rector. "They found my silver tied on his bicycle hidden in a bush, and my star he had in the lining of his coat. Susan," she exclaimed, "you don't know much about that valet of Mr. Sinclair's, do you?"

As usual, not a word of sympathy for the trying experience I had been through, not a thought about the day—nothing but rejoicing over her recovered ornament, followed by low-minded suspicions of innocent people. She was the type of all that was small and narrow and mean in the old-fashioned lady, and yet underneath there was a kind heart and a sense of personal dignity which commanded respect. Though she vexed me, I was fond of her.

The landau was waiting for her and the Rector,—“for the Rector and I,” she would have said,—Lauretta having elected to walk home with her young man. Mrs. Tobin offered to give me a lift, for I too had decided to go home on foot.

“You can drive with me as far as my gate,” she said condescendingly, “and after that it isn’t much of a walk. I would send you all the way home, but Thomas wants his dinner.”

Certainly Thomas was looking like a thunder-gust on the box.

“It would be a pity to inconvenience him,” I answered meekly, “and I really prefer my own feet—and company,” I added sotto voce to the Rector.

Again he struggled with a smile.

Off they rattled at a snail’s pace and I started for home, keeping my distance behind the lovers.

They were, of course, well behaved on the public road, but no one could have mistaken their relations to each other. Their conversation was so earnest, and sometimes they came to a standstill and exchanged long looks, and sometimes Lauretta flitted ahead and the dignified Charlie actually shook himself into a run to overtake her. As they neared their own property I permitted myself to join them.

“Mrs. Eliot,” Charlie began, “I wish you would reason with Lauretta. I want to be married next month and go to Aiken, and she says it is unfair to leave Mrs. Tobin in the middle of winter and that she won’t be married till the spring.”

“Why don’t you try to oblige the gentleman when he asks so prettily?” I said reprovingly.

Happiness had given our little paroquet a soul. Her eyes filled with tears as she answered:

“Aunt Tilly is so feeble, Susan, and she will be lonely when I go. I ought to see her through the winter.”

“Hasn’t Mrs. Tobin plans of her own?” I asked, feeling sure the problem of her own comfort had received due reflection.

“Of course she has,” broke in Charlie. “She means to visit my mother when we are married, and then Doctor Gale is going to live with her as soon as he can dispose of his own house.”

So this was to be my old friend’s reward for his life spent in the service of others—Aunt Tilly’s sole companionship at the last! Still, there were extenuating circumstances; her housekeeping was better than his, and as he and Lauretta were her only heirs, he might as well take up his duties at Tobin Towers sooner as later. I even wondered whether she might not be induced to leave him everything for his life, now that Lauretta was so amply provided for, except that I knew no mortal brave enough to broach the subject of her will to Uncle Tobin’s relict. Overfeeding and no exercise had made her as pop-eyed and

apoplectic as an old Blenheim spaniel, and her husband's lonely waiting on the other side of the Great Ferry might not be much prolonged.

I threw the weight of my influence on the side of a speedy marriage.

"Dear child," I said, "take your happiness when it comes. I will do all an outsider can to fill your place, and remember, you are bringing a new interest into Aunt Tilly's life rather than taking one out."

Lauretta kissed me and sighed gently, but I knew by the time they had reached the front door Charlie would have won her to his way of thinking.

It was one o'clock when I reached home, and hurrying upstairs to take off my things I encountered Jane coming out of the room I had had prepared for Mrs. Sinclair.

"Has Mrs. Sinclair arrived?" I asked with a tightening of the heartstrings.

Jane nodded portentously, and followed me into my room to furnish me with every particular while she put away my coat and hat.

"She do be tall," she said, "and she's a chalky color in the cheeks and she squints the eyes of her when she looks close at things. I should say"—here Jane assumed the air of a connoisseur—"that she was just sickly enough to have a very ladylike appearance, but she's not near so pretty as Mr. Sinclair, and in my *opinion* she's older nor him," and Jane wagged her head in regret at his choice.

Having brought me my slippers and picked up my discarded walking-boots, she put the finishing touch to her description.

"Her clothes bees of the best, and Flinders speaks very respectful of her."

"Ask Mrs. Sinclair to join me in the drawing-room when she is ready," I said as I left the room.

Almost at once she came—a delicate, intense-looking person with short-sighted eyes. She must have been handsome, and had still the remains of beauty in spite of ill health.

I welcomed her with more warmth than I felt.

"Our debt of gratitude is already so large," she said, retaining my hand, "that I hesitated about accepting your kind invitation to stay with you, but it seemed the only way in which I could see Harrington satisfactorily."

"I had hoped you would bring your little daughter," I responded. "Is she in New York?"

She fixed her strange eyes on my face with a puzzled look.

"You mean Dolly?" she said. "I left her with her governess on the other side, but she is not my daughter. She is Harry's child."

"Didn't she want to see her father?" I pursued, curiosity getting the best of manners.

"She couldn't very well see him, as he is still in California," she answered.

"Then her father is not *my* Mr. Sinclair!" I exclaimed, forgetting all prudence in my excitement.

"*Your* Mr. Sinclair," she said with a slightly sarcastic accent, "we call Tony in the family. Harry is Henry Sinclair, his brother."

I felt the color rush to my cheeks and back to my heart. Perhaps I had made a mistake about more people than Dolly, but I was too much agitated to puzzle it out. My nerves were hardly recovered from the shock of two nights ago, and my long walk had exhausted me more than I knew.

Mrs. Sinclair was speaking, and I pulled myself together to take in what she said.

"As we are on the subject of Harrington's family, may I ask"—and her manner grew stern and forbidding—"why no one thought it worth while to tell either Harry or me how seriously he was hurt?"

My spirit rose.

"Really," I said, "I could hardly make myself the judge of what a stranger in my house considered his obligations to his own wife and brother."

The look of anger faded out of her eyes and suppressed amusement took its place.

"Did Harrington tell you about his wife and brother?" she asked.

"Either he or Flinders," I said, searching my memory. "I think it was Flinders who told Jane when Mr. Sinclair was first carried in after the accident; but you may remember I wrote to you for him, so I could not help knowing."

"Look at me," she said. "Do I look like Harrington's wife?"

"Then who are you?" I said, approaching her, my cheeks as chalky as her own.

"I'm his stepmother," she said, with a peal of laughter, putting her hand on my arm, while I—I am ashamed to write it—I quietly slipped fainting to the floor.

That woman is an honor to her sex. She locked the doors till she had brought me to myself, and from that day to this she has never told a creature of my silent but shameful confession.

When I sat up she pointed to my bandaged wrist.

"I am so distressed to have hurt you," she said. "I must have touched your injured arm."

I fancy it was really the other arm she had touched, but it served to restore me to self-respect.

X.

A GREAT shyness stood between me and my future intercourse with Mr. Sinclair. I fancied his stepmother would tell him of my absurd

hallucination in regard to his marriage, and I wondered how my conduct would strike him from that point of view. At all events, he would understand that I had refused to listen to him under a misapprehension, and any opening I gave him now would be like an invitation to renew his pose as lover. My pride flamed at the thought. I should never give him the opportunity.

I therefore took refuge under Mrs. Sinclair's wing and hardly allowed the poor lady to leave me for a moment. She would have proved a delightful companion under any circumstances, but now that I wished to avoid tête-à-têtes with her stepson, she was doubly welcome. We gave him much of our society, but we also took many walks and drives together and got to know each other with an intimacy which years of town life could not have accomplished.

From time to time she told me of their past life. She had married the elder Mr. Harrington Sinclair when his sons were just growing into manhood, and had found herself welcomed into the family by Tony in a way which had won her deepest gratitude.

"He is his father over again," she said proudly,— "broad-minded, courteous, with true nobility of heart; all that has made life endurable in my widowhood I owe to him."

I longed to ask about Henry and his little girl, but it is only under stress of excitement that sometimes I forget courtesy in curiosity.

Presently she told me of her own accord.

"Harry never liked me," she went on musingly, as if to herself. "He resented his father's marrying, and our natures clashed. It was as much my fault as his. I seemed fated to show him my rough side, whereas Tony always fostered what was best in me.

"Then came Harry's marriage to a little actress he had met in California and my husband's bitter opposition, which Harry ascribed to my influence. Poor boy! I would have moved heaven and earth to save him from his fate, but he would not hear reason. His wife stayed with him till after Dolly was born, and then left him for a former lover.

"It killed my husband. His health had been delicate for some time and he felt his son's disgrace keenly. His pride was humiliated.

"Harry has forgiven me sufficiently to accept my care of Dolly, and our present relations are friendly, but it is Tony I love," she ended, fixing her eyes in close scrutiny on my face, as if she expected me to say, "And I also."

"How old is Dolly?" I ventured to ask.

"She is six," Mrs. Sinclair answered. "For six years I have tried to eradicate her mother's nature and make her what my husband would have liked his grandchild to be. That duty and Tony's kindness have done much to help me through these sad years."

We were walking along the path which overhung the river-bank. The day was cheerless and flakes of snow were beginning to fall. They were to leave me the next day—Harrington to meet his engagements in San Francisco, Mrs. Sinclair to take the returning steamer to Dolly. There was no doubt as to the depth of her adoration for her stepson when—delicate creature that she was!—she was willing to brave the Atlantic twice in one month to spend a week with him.

"How I shall miss you!" I exclaimed.

And straightway we fell to forming plans for the future. In the summer, when Tony would be yachting, I was to go to her in the Tyrol and we would do all the brave things her physician would permit; and next winter she and Dolly would spend Christmas at Rookwood, and from here we would go South to the land of "snakes and 'gators" and try what a winter in Florida would do for her health.

How I appreciated her delicacy in always leaving her son out of our plans.

As the snow fell faster, I hurried Mrs. Sinclair into the house. The short December day was nearly over and the fireside and tea-tray presented stronger attractions than the leaden-hued landscape.

We came in, stamping the snow from our feet and shaking our garments, and Mr. Sinclair limped into the hall to meet us. As he helped Mopsie off with her coat I thought he murmured something in her ear, but I am apt to be fanciful.

"Give Mopsie her tea at once," he begged, "even if it is not properly drawn yet. We must not let her take cold in these Highland snowstorms."

The influence this great creature had with us women was remarkable. Poor Mrs. Sinclair swallowed her scalding hot water, which disgraced the name of tea, and saying that Harrington feared she might be over-tired, went upstairs to lie down.

As the door closed behind her he turned to me.

"Have you bribed Mopsie never to leave you alone with me for a minute?" he asked reproachfully.

"It would be a waste of diplomacy when a word from you can destroy the most carefully laid plans," I said, carrying the war into his quarters.

"Yes," he owned boldly, "I did ask her to leave us. I have a great many things to say to you, and the time is short."

He sighed uneasily and, getting up, dragged his chair close to mine, where I sat beside the tea-tray.

"Mrs. Eliot, you didn't believe Doctor Gale the other night when he insinuated that I had been 'playing 'possum' about being able to walk—now, did you? I give you my word that I surprised myself more than I did you. It was the excitement and my fears for your

safety that gave me a power over my muscles which seemed like a miracle. You can't imagine what I suffered till I got to you that night."

"You need not ask for my good opinion," I said in a low voice. "You know it is always yours."

"All the same, it was an impertinence on the part of that old gentleman which I felt like resenting at the time, but it was awkward to discuss it with him."

"Forgive him, now that you are going away, and try to think kindly of all of us," and my eyes said more than my tongue.

"Think kindly," he repeated. "I feel as if all thought were merged in a great flood of love and gratitude to you. I have obeyed you and kept silence as long as disobedience could endanger our relations, but now that I am going away I shall say what I please. I love you with my whole heart and soul, and I shall never give over trying to win you till somebody else proves it impossible to me."

He had risen in his excitement and stood looking down at me with a world of tenderness in his face. I could have flung myself into his arms, but shame held me back.

"Stop," I said, also rising and facing him. "I do love you, but my love has been a crime. I do not think you will like me when I have told you all."

He looked startled for a moment, and then possessed himself of both my hands as I stood abashed before him.

"I thought that you were married, and I loved you just the same. When I knew my own heart I ought to have gone away and left you,—any right-minded woman would have done so,—but I chose to stay and dally with temptation. I loved you when I thought you false to your absent wife, and it proves—oh! it proves I'm a horrid woman, Harrington!" and my head dropped on his breast.

"It proves, my darling," he returned, "that instinct is surer than knowledge,—that something in you more discerning than reason told you that I was not a cad. You are too true a woman, sweetheart, to have loved me if I had not been yours to love."

I suppose it was sophistry, but I found it very convincing.

"Then you don't despise me," I said with a sigh of relief, "you don't think my moral backbone wobbly?"

He chuckled.

"I feel as if your moral backbone had been frozen to an icy stiffness. If your sentiments have had a glow, you have kept it well hidden from me."

And so we talked on into the deepening twilight, and in the perfect happiness of the hour we even forgot that separation awaited us on the morrow.

It was not till the clock struck seven that I remembered that the tea things had never been removed nor the lights lit, and that Jane was even now waiting to help me dress for dinner.

As we parted I put a question fraught with deepest interest.

"Did Mrs. Sinclair never tell you that I thought you were married?" I could not bring myself to explain to whom.

"Never," he answered.

"Didn't she ever say anything about a conversation we had the first day she arrived?"

"Never, on my honor," he again asserted.

"I love that woman!" I said impressively.

"Mopsie's a gentleman," he said impudently.

"She's nothing of the sort," I retorted. "She is a true woman and no cat!" and I believe wings carried me upstairs, I was so happy.

Harrington proposed that he should delay his journey for a few days in order that we might be married and I should go with him, and when I absolutely refused he suggested coming back in February, but I knew I could not be happy if I did not resign my old life in the way my conscience could best approve.

I lost Rookwood and most of Tom's money in the event of a second marriage, and I wished to hand over the property to my successor in perfect order; besides, I had many of my own cherished possessions about me, and I had to arrange for their safe-keeping during the trip round the world which Tony and I were planning, so June was the time I chose,—June, when the Rookwood gardens would be gay with roses,—June, when all nature best lends itself to the delusion that life and love and joy must last forever.



THE SWIMMER

BY FULLERTON L. WALDO

THE roil and wrath of the resounding sea
 Shall not o'erwhelm and drown me, blindly dumb;
 For I am fighting onward till I come
 Unto the haven where my heart would be.

I know a Light is shining on the shore,
 And through the mountain'd and ascending sea
 If I fight on, the Light will come to me,
 And I unto the Light, forevermore!

FATHER KNEIPP AND HIS CURE

THROUGH AN AMERICAN PATIENT'S EYES,
WITH ANECDOTES OF EMPEROR WILLIAM

By Maud Howe



CADENABBIA, LAKE OF COMO, August 29, 1894.

I FEAR the vagabond instinct is the strongest one I have, for I was glad to leave Rome a week ago—to leave my Rome, think of it! with its galleries all to myself, and its churches, and no tourists; still, the fleas had become too vicious, and all the “lame ducks” were upon me—shabby gentlemen attached to the Vatican, seedy artists with portfolios of unsold sketches, decayed gentlewomen professing Dante and lacking pupils—for the foreign colony, by which they live, has dissolved, and we were the last Anglo-Saxons left in town except some young secretaries of the British Embassy.

Unless one has seen the Sistine Chapel at noon on a blazing August day one has not really seen it. The figure of Adam receiving the touch of Life from the Creator is, for me, the highest expression of the art of painting. The hours I spent across the way at the Vatican and St. Peter's made up for any small inconveniences of the heat I may have suffered. If one is to pass a summer in a city instead of in your green Maine woods, many-fountained Rome is the city of all others! There are no mosquitoes, the nights are cool, the citizens are too poor to go away to any perceptible extent, so there is none of that desolate feeling which makes London a Desert of Sahara in August, and Paris worse. But the heat of the last week of August drove us to the Italian Lake country, and here we are at Cadenabbia—from Ca' di Nabbia, *house of Nabby*, an old woman who once lived in a little hut, or ca', on the shore. It is one of the most beautiful places on earth.

It is before breakfast. Outside my window is the Lake of Como with its mountains. On one side there is deep purple shadow, the other palpitates with light. Soon we shall have coffee and green figs in the pergola below, under the canopy of grape-leaves. Cadenabbia is all villas and hotels; behind, half way up the hill, is the village of Griende,

to reach which we climb steep streets of steps paved with round cobbles. Griento is all gray stone, with delicious arches spanning the narrow ways. The Syndic's house stands apart; his fat wife and pretty daughter seem always to be sitting sewing before the door. The Padre, a dear old man, showed us his garden and called our attention to the trellis he had contrived for his grapes. We must taste his wine, made from these Muscats—made, I warrant, by his own hands. We did taste it and found it excellent.

Sai, Signori," he said, "*un gocciatino di vino e' buono per l'estomaco.*" "Know, Signors, that a little drop of wine is good for the stomach." St. Paul was of his way of thinking.

J. has been seized with a fury of sketching; he goes every day to Griento and draws and draws! The old women and the children make much of him. Yesterday he heard one boy say to another, "It must be very hard to paint and smoke a pipe at the same time."

"*Ma ché!*" said the other, "he only does it for bravado!"

The other day he frescoed a lad's nose with vermilion like a Cherokee brave's; since then all the boys in the district torment him for the ends of his pastels.

This is one of the prosperous provinces of Italy. The town of Como has silk manufactories, where the best Italian silk stockings are made and the nicest of the piece silks. There is a feeling of comparative *bien être*. The flood of travellers that pours through here brings a certain prosperity, though I incline to think it a specious one. Everybody asks, "What would Italy do without the tourists?" Perhaps if the people were not so busy making silly knickknacks to sell to tourists, they would pay more attention to cultivating their land. Improved agricultural methods are what Italy needs above all else; she has the finest soil and climate in Europe; she could supply half the continent with fruit, oil, and wine if she had a little more common-sense! I have seen oranges and lemons rotting under the trees at Sorrento, and in Calabria grapes used to enrich the soil! This is not because the Italians are lazy—the Italian peasants are the hardest worked people I know. They tug and toil just to put bread in their mouths; they almost never taste meat. Last Sunday afternoon at the railroad station in Rome the floor and platform were covered with sleeping peasants waiting for the train to take them to their work. Each man carried round his neck seven loaves of coarse bread strung on a piece of rope, the week's rations,—dry bread, with a "finger" of wine to moisten it if he is lucky! It is evident that they are willing to work, and yet Italy is miserably poor! Somebody is blundering somewhere, I am too rank an outsider to know who. Some foreign writers lay every ill Italy endures to the heavy taxes the government has imposed. I am not so sure that what Italy has got in the last quarter century is not worth the price she

has paid for it. There are abuses, steals, a bureaucracy, and a prodigious megalomania (swelled head), but the people are learning to read and write!

That reminds me of what I heard Sir William Vernon Harcourt say at a luncheon in Rome. Some one asked where he was staying. "I am stopping at the Hotel Royal opposite to the Ministry of Finance," he said. "Strange that Italy should have the largest finance building in the world and the smallest finances!" The folly of putting up these mammoth public buildings, these dreadful monuments to Victor Emmanuel, Garibaldi, Cavour, and the other great men who brought about the *Risorgimento*, is appalling; but Italy is realizing her mistakes; she is learning at an astonishing rate.

WORMSHOVEN, BAVARIA, September 20, 1894.

I have been banished by bronchitis from the Eden, Cadenabbia, and have come to Father Kneipp's Water-Cure near Munich, although it is a little late in the season to take the "cure." It is *de rigueur* before seeing Father Kneipp to consult a regular practitioner, who pronounces whether or no you are a fit subject; people with weak hearts are not allowed to take the cure. I paid a small sum, became a member of the Kneipp Verein, received a blank-book—in which the *medico* wrote out a diagnosis—and a ticket stating the hour of my appointment with "the *Pfarrer*," as Father Kneipp is called. I turned up a little before time at an immense barrack of a place like the waiting-room at a railroad station. The door to the consulting-room was guarded by two functionaries who read aloud our numbers as our turn came, looking carefully at the tickets before letting anyone enter.

"*Ein und zwanzig!*" (twenty-one), and I passed into the long room and stood before Father Kneipp, like a prisoner at the bar. He is one of the most powerful-looking men I have ever seen; his eyes pierced me through and through. I handed him the book with the diagnosis. He read it, grunted, ruminated, bored me with a second auger glance, then dictated my course of treatment to one of his secretaries, a callow *clerico* who sat beside him at a long table with three or four other men.

I found out afterwards that they were young doctors studying his methods. Father Kneipp spoke to me rather sharply, going directly to the point. Never mind what he said, I deserved it, I shall not forget it, and, like Dr. Johnson, "I think to mend!" "Come again in a fortnight," he said suddenly. The consultation was over and I was ushered out. I had not reached the door when "*Zwei und zwanzig*," a crippled boy, a far more interesting case than mine, came in.

Father Kneipp dislikes women, ladies especially, me in particular, because no one had warned me not to wear gloves, a veil, and a good

bonnet. If I had put an old shawl over my head and looked generally forlorn, he would have been kinder. Isn't that dear? His benevolence is of the aggressive type; he grudges time spent on rich people,—is only reconciled to them, in fact, because they offer up gifts in return for health, and in this way a great sanitarium has grown up where the prince is nearly as well treated as the peasant—but it is the peasant folk, his own people, that the Pfarrer loves! This is the only truly democratic community I have ever lived in,—a pure democracy governed by a benevolent despot! The despot is past seventy years old; he has an aldermanic figure, a rough peasant head, and extraordinary bristling white eyebrows, standing out a good two inches from his penthouse brows. His coloring is like an old English country squire's, brick-red skin, bright blue eyes, and silver hair. He is a prelate; so his rusty black cassock is piped with purple silk, and he wears a tiny purple skull-cap. His two inseparables were with him, a long black cigar and a white Spitz dog. . . .

The fortnight is almost up, the cough gone, the vitality come. Yesterday I went to hear one of the Father's health talks in the big, open hall, free to all. Good, practical common-sense was what he gave us, nothing new or startling,—just the wholesome advice of a very wise old man. Enthusiasm and common-sense are his weapons. After it was over we waited to see him come out. A group of bores hung on to him; one sentimentalist caught his hand and tried to kiss it, which so enraged the Pfarrer that he gave the fellow a slap!

Such people! If you could only hear them testify to their cures, like lepers and the halt in the Bible! Tell Anagnos that two blind men say they have been cured here this summer. The applications were general, not local, save bathing the eyes in warm straw water. Sounds simple, doesn't it? One had been blind four years, the other longer. Atrophy of the nerves of the eye was the trouble in both cases. The younger man was going away in despair after a few weeks' treatment. He drove to the station, got into the train; *suddenly he saw something moving*, cars going in the other direction! He got out again, returned to Woerishofen, persevered with the treatment, and now sees! A South African couple sit at my table; they have come all the way from Cape Town. For seventeen long years the husband suffered with nervous dyspepsia, whatever that may be. One summer at Woerishofen has cured him. Does this sound like Paine's Celery Compound? I learn as much from the other patients as any other way. Herr Schnell, a German New Yorker,—a hardware man,—and his wife are my best friends. She first spoke to me at table.

"Dot Caffee is not good for Ihnen. *Sie müssen Wasser trinken.*"

"I am here for my throat," I told her; "I only need hardening; besides, Father Kneipp drinks coffee."

"Dot Pfarrer is not krank—sick, how you say?"

My dear, she actually sent the coffee away, and forbade the *kellner* ever to bring it to me again! The Schnells and I patronize the same fruit-stand, and we walk up and down after meals together, eating grapes out of paper bags. A certain forlorn Pole at our table interests me; he is called Count Chopski, or some such name. His nerves are shattered by too much cigarette smoking. Frau Schnell and I came upon him in the wood the other day, sitting behind a big tree smoking. Frau Schnell marched up to him, took the cigarette out of his hand, and gave him a scolding for smoking on the sly. He began to cry!

I am at the best hotel, which is of a simplicity! Big people and little people all sit down to the half-past-twelve dinner; only royalties (there are always some of them here) are allowed to keep any state. At the table next mine a Bishop and a ballet-dancer sit side by side; it is an open joke to all of us, except the Bishop, who doesn't know, and nobody will tell him,—I call that nice feeling. In all my life I have never met with such simple kindness as there is here; it's a sort of Kingdom-come place, where everybody feels responsible for everybody else. Nothing of the am-I-my-brother's-keeper? feeling here! Of course, it is all Pfarrer Kneipp; the whole atmosphere of place and people is the expression of a great, ardent heart which beats for sick humanity, which rages against all shams and cruelties. His atmosphere is like my father's, the spirit here more like that of the old Institution for the Blind in his day, than anything I have ever known.

When Sebastian Kneipp was a young student preparing for the priesthood (he was the son of a poor weaver) his health broke down so completely that he was obliged to give up his studies. One day in a convent library he stumbled on a copy of Preissnitz's book on water-cure. Impressed by the theory, he persuaded a fellow-student in the same predicament as himself to join him in putting it into practice. It was midwinter. The two lads broke the ice from a neighboring stream in which they took their baths. Heroic treatment, but it saved them; both soon regained their health. Kneipp finished his course of study, took orders, returned to his native village of Woerishofen as parish priest, and has remained here ever since.

From the beginning he seems to have been more interested in curing his parishioners' bodies than in saving their souls. He tells of being called to administer the last sacrament to a dying man. The moment he saw him he threw away book and candle, called for a pail of water and a linen sheet, put the patient in a wet pack, and saved his life. For many years the Pfarrer only practised among his peasant neighbors. Gradually his fame spread to the surrounding villages, to the city of Munich, to other cities. People began to flock to Woerishofen from all over Germany, France, Europe, America, till finally this obscure Bavarian hamlet has become one of the world's great Meccas of health.

The only person who makes any effort for society is an Austrian Countess, a great Court lady. She has taken a tiny cottage, brought her own cook, maid, and butler from Vienna, and tries to give "at homes." I heard some good music at her rooms the other day. Somehow she had managed to draw together half a dozen people of the sort that can make "society" in the prison of La Jacquerie, on an ocean steamer, or even at a German cure,—an Austrian officer, an English diplomat, a French Abbé, my Polish Count, and the musician, who is a real artist. We walked with the gods for that hour; the pianist gave us whatever we asked for—Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Greig. It was a *Kaffee-klatzsch* without the coffee (all stimulants are forbidden, even tea and coffee); the butler handed—scornfully, I thought—milk and grapes. The party broke up rather hurriedly at sunset, everybody rushing away to get their *Wassertreten* before dark. Water treading is to wade up to one's knees in one of the streams which run through the fields. Very pleasant, very comic—fortunately, there is a male stream and a female stream; such chippendales! such piano legs have I seen! It is all so strange, so *echt deutsch*! The Countess does not harmonize with the rest, she is out of key. I meet her at seven o'clock in the morning, feet, head, neck, and arms bare, strolling over the wet grass, a lovely, incongruous vision; hair dressed and "*ondulée*" in the latest fashion; her parasol, rose-colored satin. Now, a rose-colored satin parasol at Woerishofen is a false note in a pastoral symphony. She worships Father Kneipp; they all say she owes him her life; he cannot endure her, has attacked her almost openly in his talks; he will not tolerate folly, vanity, or worldliness; she personifies—oh, so charmingly—all three! She wears the prescribed dress of coarse Kneipp linen with such a difference; the other women look like meal-sacks; she has the lines of a Greek goddess.

In the early morning all the patients walk barefoot through the wet grass. Those who have been here longest go without shoes and stockings all day. I am told it is delightful to walk barefoot in the new-fallen snow. Women's skirts reach only to the ankles; men wear knickerbockers. The only foot-gear allowed at Woerishofen is the leather sandal, classic and comfortable. Newcomers begin by wearing the sandal over the stocking, then the stocking is left off for half an hour—an hour—finally for the whole day. An hour and a half after breakfast and dinner a cold douche is taken. The *blitzguss* (lightning douche) is for people who have been taking the cure for some time, the *rumpf* (body) douche is commonly prescribed for new arrivals. At the ladies' bath attached to this hotel a rosy *mädchen* plays the hose upon the patient with skill and firmness. That ordeal over, the dripping victim scrambles hastily into her clothes—drying and rubbing are forbidden—and exercises vigorously until she is perfectly dry and warm. The ex-

hilaration which follows is indescribable. In the exercise-room attached to the largest bath I have seen a Bishop capering, a Princess sawing wood, a fat American millionaire pirouetting with a balancing pole. No one laughs; it is too grave a matter. You dance or prance, box, saw wood, or do calisthenics for your life—anything to get up a circulation!

Bavaria is enchanting, Bavarians are delightful, not at all like other Germans, more like the Tyrolese, simple, kind, deeply religious. I cannot imagine becoming a "convert" in Rome, but here it would be easier. Why should the people of Catholic countries have better manners than Protestants? I know, you will bring up some old saw about sincerity and truth not always being compatible with suavity! We can't be *all* right and they *all* wrong, and "yet and yet" the Pope keeps his own private account at the Bank of England! Does this mean that he, like the people I meet every day, is readier to trust an Englishman or an American than his own countrymen?

I keep thinking of him, my neighbor in Rome, the Prisoner of the Vatican, shut up between the walls of his garden through all the long summer. I used to look at his windows and wonder if he felt the heat as much as I in those last August days before we came away on our *villeggiatura*. No *villeggiatura* for him, he is still there! The "Black Pope" (as the power of the Jesuit is called) is his gaoler,—not good King Humbert, as you may have been led to suppose,—but a prison is a prison, whoever the gaoler may be.

I am learning all I can about the Kaiser. I am inclined to think he plays the strongest game at the European card-table. The Bavarians I have talked with seem rather bored by him; they compare him unfavorably with poor, dear, mad King Ludwig and his father, great art patrons, both.

The Prussians think him the greatest man on earth. I gather from one of their number that the Court people are harried by him beyond belief; he is forever interfering with their private affairs. A young officer with an English wife and English tastes set up a tandem in Berlin last winter. He received a message from the Emperor requesting him not to drive one horse before the other! How can they bear it? The Kaiser had lately been at Rome when we first arrived, and people were still telling stories of him. The Italians are not over-fond of his visits; he costs a great deal to entertain and is too much given to dropping in to tea! He stayed at the Quirinal Palace, the guest of the King. As such, etiquette forbade his visiting the Pope. You don't suppose he let a little thing like that interfere! On a day the German Ambassador to the Vatican (you understand there are two Ambassadors, don't you, one to the King, one to the Pope?) received notice that the Emperor was to be his guest for the morrow. The Ambassa-

sador, a bachelor of simple tastes, prepared as best he could. The Emperor arrived with a portmanteau, made one of his lightning changes, and came down to breakfast. The breakfast-table was a bright spot, a friend having lent a fine service of silver and some wonderful Venetian glass. When the Kaiser saw the display he cried out, "Mein Gott, A——, where did you steal all these?" Rather nice, wasn't it? After they had "eated and drinked," a carriage, come all the way from Berlin, with horses, harnesses, and servants to match, drove up to the door and carried the Emperor off to call on the Pope! It would not have been etiquette to use the Italian royal carriage to pay the papal visit!

Prince Doria's ball for the Kaiser must have been gorgeous; the picture-gallery was a blaze of glory,—you remember the great Velasquez portrait of Pope Julius II. there?—all the jewels in Rome were present except the emeralds of the Pope's tiara. When he went away the Kaiser said to the Prince,—

"We shall be very glad to see you at Potsdam, but we cannot show you anything like this." Handsome of him, wasn't it?

When he went sight-seeing to St. Peter's he admired my fountains. Well he might! After watching them some time he said, "Turn them off now; it's a pity to waste so much water." Thrifty, eh? Turn off Carlo Maderno's fountains, which have danced in the sun and shimmered in the moon nigh three hundred years!



WOOD VOICES

BY ROBERT GILBERT WELSH

CHICKADEE,

What a merry note is yours!

Calling us so gleefully,

Chickadee,

Could a friendlier errant be

Sent to lure us out of doors?

Chickadee,

What a merry note is yours!

Thrush with the silver song,

Gramercy for your lay!

You to Romance belong,

Thrush with the silver song,

And you bring the poet-throng

To our world of workaday.

Thrush with the silver song,

Gramercy for your lay!

THE SEVENTEENTH OF AUGUST, 1844

By Marion Harland

Author of "His Great Self," "A Gallant Fight," etc.



PEOPLE who are old enough to recollect what happened on Saturday, the seventeenth of August, 1844, insist that it was a bodeful as well as a brooding hush that rested upon the Court-House village as the afternoon drew towards sunset.

The sun was a heated copper ball; the cloudless sky looked hard and hot. The fine, red dust, beaten to powder by many wheels and hoofs, hung languidly above the one broad street crooking from east to west in traversing the hamlet.

The loungers in the porch of the largest of the three stores representing the mercantile interests of the place wore their thinnest summer clothes. Most of them held their hats upon their knees; six out of the nine had their feet on the porch-railing.

It had been an exciting day, and the little town looked tired. Up and down the street were to be seen family groups upon doorsteps and at open windows, but the low hum of conversation was intermittent and scarcely stirred the sultry air. Loafers in knots of twos and threes occupied the benches set against the outer wall of the Bell Tavern, the principal hostelry of the region, a long, low, white building broadened by a two-storied portico. Several Lombardy poplars, their boles white-washed up to the lowest boughs, stood in front of the portico—seven finger-posts pointing straight, but listlessly, towards heaven, the leaves too heavy-laden with dust to quiver had there been a breath of wind, and there was none.

Half-a-dozen negro women hung about the well which stood between the tavern and the store, empty buckets in hands, full buckets on heads. The bearers leaned towards one another in subdued confabulation, nodding portentously, and now and then groaning low and with unction. No strain of imagination was required to conceive that the coppery sun, the hard, hot sky, motionless trees, and drooping vines shared in the expression of suspenseful waiting pervading men and women and even the children sitting upon doorsteps, or lying upon the dusty grass edging the crooked street.

Suddenly from a house directly opposite the store a burst of music

broke the hush into startled vibrations. The leap and ripple of a popular air from piano-keys was overborne by a voice, clear and buoyant as a mocking-bird's matins :

" Oh, the floating scow of Ole Virginia!
That I've from day to day,
A rakin' among the oyster-beds,
To me it was but play.
But now I'm old and crazy, too,
I cannot work any more,
Oh, carry me back, oh, carry me back
To Ole Virginia's shore!"

The audacious lilt and swing of the chorus brought six pairs of heels from the porch-rail to the floor to beat time softly; one bass voice hummed a deep "brum! brum!" as an accompaniment; two negro children, with but a single garment apiece, fell to dancing before the store-door, the red dust swirling under the double shuffle. The loitering negroes pricked up their ears, transfixed as by a common horror; up and down the street ran a wave of excitement, heightened, as the songstress began the second verse, by the apparition in the door of the store of the burly proprietor, George Swann, the biggest and the richest man in the town. The bass voice and the drumming were stilled on the instant; consternation and amusement passed from eye to eye.

The big man's keen gray eyes, deep-set under bushy brows, took in every man of the party as he strode past; at the bottom of the steps he dealt a cuff to each of the dancers that tumbled him heels over head into the road—but he said never a word.

"He's after other game!" muttered one of the rebuked loafers as the irate merchant disappeared within his own house.

Another groaned, "O Lord!" with a meaning shrug; a third, "I wouldn't be in her shoes for a pretty!"

"She can take care of herself!" responded the owner of the good bass voice, striving palpably after self-reassurance. "She's a chip of the old block with the bark on. Listen!"

For the gay run of melody went on, more clearly audible across the street, as if the singer had turned her face towards her father at his entrance:

"And when I'm dead and gone to rest
Lay th' ole banjo by my side,
Let the 'possum an' th' 'coon to th' fun'ral come,
For they were my only pride.
In soft repose I'll sweetly sleep,
An' I'll dream forever more
They're carryin' me back to Ole Virginia,
To Ole——"

While she sang a man was speaking, more and more loudly until a harsh bellow carried some words to the listeners over the way.

"I will be master in my own house! Stop that racket, I say! You won't! We'll see about that, my lady!"

A crash and a stifled scream broke off the song and brought five young men to their feet.

"By ——! if the brute has hit her, I'll *kill* him!" panted the bass singer, red and choking. "*There's* a Christian father for you!"

An older man put out a lazy leg to intercept the other's motion towards the steps.

"Keep cool, Dick Lowry! He slammed the piano-lid down on her hands. I heard the keys rattle. Don't *you* put your fingers between the bark and the tree. Somebody said somethin' just now about a chip and the bark. I ain't takin' his part, mind you, but she's his child, and he's the strictest kind of a Methodist, rec'lect, and '*twas* kinder owddacious to play that nigger song just at sunset, don't you know?"

The drawl sank into an odd, reverent cadence upon the last words, and the eyes of all turned by common impulse to the west.

The treetops seemed on fire with the consuming heat of the red-hot globe as the lower rim touched the forest horizon. In all the tremendous hollow above them there was insupportable glare and silence. The whole world waited and listened. A shamefaced pause ensued that would have been unaccountable to one ignorant of that day's history. Then one "reckoned" awkwardly that "it must be near supper-time," and the group dispersed—some up street, some down.

Within ten minutes the long, wavering, dusty line of highway was forsaken of all except a few children, white and colored, sitting about doors or hanging over the palings. Even they were quieter than was their noisy wont.

The day which was soon to darken into a purple August night was to be forever memorable in the annals of the mid-Virginia shire-town.

It was an easy-going, pleasure-loving community in the main, without a touch of the stern asceticism that made monumental the piety of their New England brethren. Yet it was a religious people, believing steadfastly in the faith committed to the saints as interpreted by their preachers, and in nothing more steadfastly than in the necessity of conviction and conversion, regeneration and baptism, leading up to enrolment upon the church books for every creature born of mortal woman if one would escape an eternity of misery. There was not a Universalist within the confines of the county. By whatsoever name they called themselves, every churchmember held fast to the essential points of doctrinal belief I have named, and the boldest sinner without the pale enclosing the saints never hinted a doubt as to their truth.

So the great concourse that had assembled at the Court-House this

week to attend upon revival services held in the only church in the village was solemnized, if not convicted, by the exceptionally "powerful" preaching to which all classes had hearkened, at the rate of three sermons daily, from Sunday morning until Saturday afternoon.

The church stood apart from the Court-House proper. It was an ugly brick building, stained blackly from unguttered eaves downward with the drippings of twenty years' storms, and stained redly upward by splashes from the mud about the foundation-walls. There was no enclosure except at the back, where a rude rail fence kept straying cattle out of a graveyard as dismal as the church. Not a tombstone gleamed in this one of God's acres; briars, wire-grass, and Jamestown weeds obliterated the outlines of mounds and filled up graves that had sunken gruesomely with the decaying of what they held. One tall pine that had grown bushy in isolation towered above the roof-tree and sang a ceaseless requiem for the neglected dead in its shadow.

By an architectural freak, not uncommon in Virginia at the time of which I am writing, the pulpit was between the two front doors. The freak was not unpopular with first-comers, who, seated at their ease, could scrutinize later arrivals from the moment they appeared in the doorway until they found refuge from the fire of eyes upon one of the obdurate benches, and became in their turn observers and critics. The benches were unpainted; the back of each consisted of a single flat rail that pressed cruelly under the shoulder-blades of the tall and abraded the shoulder-caps of the undersized.

The church had been swept and scrubbed—the period antedating the garnishing of orthodox sanctuaries with pines and posies—the week before, under the direct supervision of Mrs. George Swann, in preparation for the revival. That this church in particular and the neighborhood in general were to be visited by "a gracious outpouring" was a foregone conclusion, for the Presiding Elder would be present to uphold the hands of the local circuit-rider, a fledgeling theologian of few intellectual or educational gifts and much conceit. Other brethren from other fields would bear part in the week's exercises, some of them men of spiritual might and unbroken wind. The drawing card, however, was a young preacher whose rising reputation as orator and saint was a matter of especial interest to the Swann connection, and through this connection a source of liveliest interest to their fellow county people.

Blair Winfree, a graduate of Randolph Macon College, had, when a candidate for licensure to preach the gospel, fallen under the deep-set gray eyes of Brother Swann at a Conference held in Lynchburg. The promising youth found approval in the judgment of the prosperous merchant. He introduced him to his wife and his two daughters, Mary and Signora, who had accompanied him to the Conference. In a burst of surprised confidence to his wife, three months thereafter, George

Swann owned that he "wouldn't have minded if the fellow had fallen in love with Mary." As a sound Arminian he held no commerce with predestinarians, but he had always thought, and sometimes said, that Mary was cut out for a minister's wife. Instead of lending a hand in the fulfilment of this purpose, Blair Winfree—a "Reverend" by now—fell swiftly and hopelessly in love with Mary's younger, prettier, and gayer sister. At the end of a quarter's wooing by visits and letters he had won her affections and her pledge to become his wife.

"Sister Swann"—a mother in Israel, as well as mistress of the fine new house her husband had put up over the way from the store where the money was made to build and to run it—was not a novel-reader. A majority of her sect and a goodly percentage of Presbyterians classed fiction with card-playing and dancing—devilish schemes, all of them, for the enslavement and ruin of immortal souls. Nevertheless, she had once, in a backsliding interval, dipped into a romance in which a leading character was habitually addressed as "Signora." As Mrs. Swann afterwards expressed it, she was "sort of nervous and notional just then, and on the lookout for a real pretty, uncommon name, and this one stuck to her mind." So persistently did it adhere, and so potent was the obsession, that she would hear of no other for her second daughter, born during that backsliding summer. The mother and her neighbors, who had never read the Italian romance, pronounced the "fancy name" as it was spelled. Shortened into "Sig," it stood, eighteen years thereafter, for the dashing belle of a provincial circle. The circle was not small. Her father was well-to-do and sure to be much better-to-do. Before she tucked her hair up and let her skirts down Sig Swann had had proposals, and the number multiplied almost weekly as she grew towards the twenties. Why she accepted a poor preacher was as grievous a puzzle to men of all ages as his choice of her as a life-partner was to maidens and matrons of the more pious sort.

She was not a churchmember. True, that unsanctified condition might change through a providential interposition, borne out by the efforts of the gracious young man who had "brought" so many other unregenerate souls "through." Providence and a believing husband combined could not alter the girl's disposition and character. She was a born flirt, a rattle and madcap, as wild as a hawk, incorrigibly light-hearted and light-headed. Her saucy sayings were quoted throughout the county, her daring escapades came just short of being scandals. Had Brother Winfree searched the world over he could not have found a woman less fit to be a minister's wife.

The engagement was not announced, or even frankly acknowledged. The customs of the time and the locality forbade this. So there was ample opportunity for all the parties in the case to hear how friends and acquaintances thought and talked of the "affair." The Swanns

listened and were discreet. The father brooked no interference in his family or business concerns; his wife and model Mary thought just as father did. Sig laughed criticism out of court and went on her way, rejoicing in her youth, her happiness, and her love. "Carried a higher head than ever!" said censors and admirers.

This was the sixth day of the Protracted Meeting, and next to the last. The Presiding Elder and his working staff were due on Monday in other parts of the vineyard. Nerved by the thought that the day of grace was drawing to an end, public preaching and private exhortations were terribly "close" both morning and afternoon—an electric storm of warning and provisional anathemas that shook the impenitent to trembling and tears. The altar was thronged with kneeling mourners, and the aisle for half the depth of the church. The attendant ministers and their lay assistants picked their way warily among their spiritual patients for fear of stumbling over men's legs or catching a toe in the trailing folds of a woman's gown.

Sig Swann sat in a side-aisle against the wall and by a window. The position was deliberately chosen and with purpose. She had, from her coign of vantage, an excellent view of her lover in the pulpit, and could exchange over the low sill an occasional repartee, sotto voce, with a band of youths who preferred standing-room in the fresh air to being packed within-doors like sweating herrings in a barrel. The Reverend Elisha Powell, the county circuit-rider, who always spread his handkerchief under his knees when he dropped upon them for a special petition in altar and aisle, pulled himself up from the twentieth repetition of the performance, and, facing the congregation, wiped the blinding perspiration from his eyes and mopped his lantern jaws with the expansive damp cambric on which grime from the gritty boards had melted into mud.

The young fellows outside ducked grinning faces below the window-sill to guffaw and chuckle in comfort. Sig Swann buried her face in her handkerchief, bowing her head upon the back of the bench before her in an agony of suppressed mirth. The convulsion lasted long and was fierce. The strong necessity of stifling all audible tokens of the paroxysm that held her by the throat and stopped her breath, united with a growing sense of the grotesque incongruities of scene and sensations to overpower even such proprieties as she recognized and would fain obey. She was quivering like a leaf in a whirlwind when a hand fell upon her bowed back.

"Daughter, resist not the strivings within you!" said raucous accents in her ear. "Take my arm and let me lead you to the altar. There yet is room at the mercy-seat."

The prettiest face in the church, flushed and tearful, was raised to see a coarse visage within two inches of it—coarse in mould and ruddied

by rum. Watery eyes leered into the girl's, which dried instantly in a blaze of indignant modesty. She shuddered away from the heavy hand, seeming to strike it off in a gesture of loathing and repulsion.

"Don't touch me!" she uttered in a hissing whisper, glancing wildly around for some way of escape.

In the same flash of time and thought she gathered her skirts deftly about her, put one foot upon the seat, mounted with birdlike swiftness to the back, and flew through the window, as a swallow might flit, into strong, emulous arms stretched to receive her.

Mrs. Swann always drove to church. Matrons of her age and that age never thought of walking a hundred yards upon their own feet. Her carriage was close by. Sig sprang into it, fell back upon the cushions, and had the laugh which was a cry—the cry which was a laugh—out, unrestrained by the sympathizing plaudits of "the boys" she had known and romped with all her life.

Fully fifteen minutes passed before she stole back into the church, prettier than ever in her subdued mood and forced demureness. As she told the boys, there would be no end of talk if she stayed in the carriage and talked with them until church was out. To herself she said that Blair Winfree was sure to be called upon to speak again before meeting broke up. She never willingly lost one word that he said in public or in private. He would miss her even in that throng. He had told her often that he was never quite himself when she was out of his sight. He was speaking when she had slipped through the crowd until she could catch a glimpse of him. The face she thought as beautiful as a young god's had a clear pallor, like the shining of white flame through an alabaster mask; his voice had deep tones that were new even to her; the forced calmness of his enunciation was more impressive than his most impassioned bursts of oratory had ever been. He made not a gesture from first to last. Erect and still, he gave forth the message that burdened soul and heart.

"To-morrow is the last—the great—day of this solemn feast," were the first words that reached the girl's ears.

"To-morrow the gate of mercy may be—will certainly be—closed upon some who now hear these words. I ask each one now present—whether Christian or impenitent, saint or sinner—to devote to this subject, the most momentous man or woman can consider, just ten minutes at sunset this evening. Go apart and alone, each of you, and think seriously for that little quarter-inch of time where you mean to spend Eternity. It is a little thing that I ask of you—a dying man of his dying fellow-men. To-day, if you will hear His voice, listen for it as the sun looks his last upon the world you must leave before long. Give God and His message to each individual soul but ten minutes. Commune with your own heart and be still. Your eternal destiny may be settled in that span of time.

"It may be that some soul in this vast assembly may never see that sinking sun kiss the eastern horizon to-morrow morning. I do not know to whom of you this may be the last night on earth. I do know that God will not always hold out the pardon I, His most unworthy servant, offer to you now in my King's name. In the breathless hush of this hour I recognize the Spirit's waiting upon your next step—upon what may be your final action. Carry this awful thought home with you. I am making a sunset appointment for you with that Spirit."

While he was speaking the Presiding Elder had arisen, and now stepped forward to his side, laying his episcopal arm almost caressingly about the well-built shoulders. His liking for the brilliant young brother was patent to all within the diocese.

"Well-spoken!" he said, weighing the oily gutturals as one might distil precious ointment of spikenard, cassia, and myrrh. "The words of my dear brother are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. I would enforce—not add to—they. If anyone within the sound of his voice or of mine fails to devote the sunset moments of this day as he has implored you to devote them, let not that man or that woman send for either of us in his or her dying hour, when the guilty soul would, like Russia's mighty Empress, give millions of money for an inch of time. Vain then will be the help of man. You have listened to a gracious invitation. Couple this warning with it in your minds as you leave this mount of privilege for homes that, ere long, will know you no more."

He lifted one long arm, in pronouncing the benediction, as deprecating the vengeance of an offended God.

Mrs. Swann, her daughters, and Blair Winfree drove home in company. The mother and Mary wept behind their handkerchiefs all the way down the street. Blair sat upright in his corner of the front seat, looking gloomily towards the horizon with eyes that saw not. Sig bowed and smiled to acquaintances walking and driving towards their respective homes, and twice kissed her hand to girls who looked curiously at carriage and occupants.

"We are making a holy show of ourselves," meditated she to her madcap inner self, biting a restive tongue to hold in the words. "I should like to shake Blair and Mary! It's a part of mother's religion to cry in public. All this sort of thing makes me as hard as flint and as wicked as the Old Harry!"

When her mother and sister passed sobbingly into the house the aroused imp of mischief tempted her to stop at the gate to exchange greetings with Dick Lowry and his sister, who would have gone by but for her merry challenge. Blair Winfree stood a little aloof, waiting for her, his imperturbable gravity protesting unequivocally against levity he esteemed out-of-taste and irreverent.

Susie Lowry ran back to drop a word in her friend's ear:

"But *won't* you catch it? He looks 'grand, gloomy, and peculiar!' I should be afraid as death of him!"

Sig laughed outright, rather fearlessly than defiantly, and joined her lover.

"Are you very tired?" she queried, looking frankly and brightly up at him.

"Not in the least, thank you," formally civil, his eyes absolutely irresponsive to the gay seeking of hers. "Can you come to the summer-house presently? I want to talk with you."

"By way of variety?" a loving glint in the saucy glance. "I'll be there in five minutes—as soon as I can get rid of my bonnet and gloves. How hot it is! I'm sure the thermometer must be a thousand in the shade!"

Mrs. Swann, kneeling in prayer in her locked chamber, wept more abundant and saltier tears as the fleet steps went by her door and the happy voice trolled a snatch of "Bonny Doon" upon the stairs. The day had brought to her the bread of grief to eat, flavored with bitter herbs of mortification.

The trysting-place stood in the exact centre of the spacious garden—a roomy arbor, paved with gravel, walled and roofed by white and yellow jessamine, virgin's bower (known to modern florists as wistaria), and divers sorts of honeysuckle. Something was always blooming there, from the golden bells of the jessamine and pale purple clusters, like etherealized grapes, of the wistaria, that took brave precedence of foliage in springtime, to the Christmas flowering of the Florida honeysuckle, which never cast its leaves.

Signora Swann had no coy secrets from her betrothed. He knew from her own confession that the summer-house was the dearest spot upon earth to her, and why. He had first told his love here, in language so fervid as to chase all disposition to coquetry from her mind. She had trembled and swayed before the passionate outpouring as the weakest of her sex, who had never, until that hour, hearkened to a "proposal," might have thrilled and shrank. Here and then she had promised to be his wife—"the sun, the inspiration, and the glory of his life." That was the way he put it then, and, with a thousand variations, since that sunset hour when she could have been sure that all the vines were in blossom at once, and that the gold and silver bells of the jessamine, the coral bells of the honeysuckle, rang together for joy even her nimble tongue could not syllable. She had a habit of bringing Blair's letters here to read. Sometimes the rain dripped through the green matting of the roof, and she laughed up at the clouds. More than once snow had fallen upon what she called in her answers to Blair her "red-letter days." She would read the loveful pages nowhere else.

He had tasted the bitter-sweet of these associations with the sylvan shelter, sitting upon "their bench," smileless and sad, before he heard the far-off click of the garden-gate. A ponderous weight and chain drew it shut, drawing the iron latch violently into its socket.

"The sentinel upon the outer wall," Sig had named it, and it had done them many a good turn in signalling the approach of possible intruders. Against his will—or so it seemed—he leaned forward to watch for the first glimpse of her. She was in full sight in the embowered alley when a white rose-spray, loaded with flowers, caught at her hair as she tripped by, and she stopped to disentangle it. She did it with careful touches. She was ever tender to flowers, to children, and to all helpless things.

And how bewitching! His heart swelled painfully under the straight-breasted coat as the eyes he could not turn away renewed the inventory of the charms that had enslaved him. He stood six feet in his boots, and she, as he loved to remind her, "no higher than his heart"—the heart on which the bonny head, crowned with rust-brown curls, had rested times without number.

He winced restlessly and moaned faintly, his hand moving towards his chest, where the novel, nameless pain was boring like a heated rapier.

Her eyes were the same color as her hair, with lights like the flashes from the heart of a ruby in them when she laughed; her complexion had the clear pink of a peach-blossom; her teeth between the ripe lips were even and pure as the royal lover's flock "gone up from the washing." The simile came to the watcher for the first time. It was odd he had never quoted the words to her in this, their garden of delights.

She was close upon his retreat, skimming the walk as a boat the water, her filmy muslin blowing and billowing in the breeze created by the motion. He ought to rise and step forward to meet her. He sat still until, parting the trailing festoons about the doorway, she forestalled his motion by coming straight up to him, took his face in her two hands, and kissed him between the eyes. Then, in the safe privacy of the vine-woven walls, she alighted upon his knee.

"And what does my dear boy want to talk to me about?" she trilled in pleased expectancy.

The hardest task of his life was upon him. The future could have none other so hard.

He began it with "God help me!" and believed the inward groaning was a prayer. In saying it he recalled the Presiding Elder's tone in uttering, "God help and give you courage, my dear boy!" at their parting less than half-an-hour ago. He reminded himself, also, that he must report after the night service to his superior (who would almost certainly be a bishop some day).

He made short work of the business in hand. I, the chronicler of an "ower-true tale," will make it yet more brief.

He and his best friends—notably his brethren in the ministry—had long appreciated (reluctantly) the "extreme inadvisability" of the union of a minister of the gospel and a non-professor. He (and they) had hoped and prayed that her conversion would make the crooked way straight. As matters now stood, in view of her disregard of her soul's interests and her contempt for sacred things displayed in many ways, the question forced itself upon his mind—

She seemed not to have followed him quite to the point at which she interrupted him, but to have caught an earlier phrase.

"Contempt for sacred things!" she repeated, bewildered. "I am not a Christian, I know, and I have told you one hundred times, at least, that I am not half good enough to be a minister's wife—not one-tenth good enough to be yours. But I do respect religion—the real sort, such as you and mother and a few other people I know have. And I try to treat sacred things respectfully."

It may have been that the loving humility of the reference to himself stabbed him too keenly for the perfect control he had meant to maintain, and that the hurt to heart and conscience sharpened his speech. He dallied no longer with preliminaries.

"Your behavior this afternoon confirmed our gravest misgivings," he said abruptly. "It was indecorous in the extreme——"

He stopped, confounded by the change from grieved perplexity to unfeigned amusement. Her face dimpled and glowed with fun and relief.

"Oh!" with a long breath. "You saw me, did you? I was in hopes you didn't. But, dear boy,"—her favorite pet name for the stalwart Adonis,—"*you couldn't have seen and understood all! Poor Mr. Powell's handkerchief was dirty—you know he is so careful of his new pantaloons, and the floor is awfully dusty. Why, Blair! his face looked like the American flag, all but the stars. It was striped like a zebra. I can't imagine how he did it so regularly.*"

She stopped, overcome by the recollection, sobering down at the heavier cloud upon the listener's brow.

"I did try hard not to laugh,—but there were the boys at the window, you know, and Dick Lowry snickered and dodged out of sight—and Mr. Powell was so innocent and sanctimonious—and *so streaked!* Don't be angry, dear! Jeremiah himself couldn't have kept his face straight."

Blair raised a rebuking hand. Gesture and tone were professional.

"I saw it all, and felt no inclination to smile. I saw too, as did every preacher on the platform, that you pushed Mr. Harris away rudely before you jumped through the window. He referred to it in

the conference of ministers and lay-workers held after the services were over. He had every reason, he said, to think that you were under conviction, and was moved by the best intentions in offering to lead you to the altar. God knows"—the man getting the better of the priest—"how I wish things had been as he thought! It would have changed the whole face of the world for me!"

Love's intuition divined his meaning. Her hand stole up to stroke the bowed head.

"Blair, dear, that man was *drunk*! His breath scorched my face when he called me 'daughter.' He is a bad man, through and through. His touch is an insult to any decent woman. If the day ever comes when I go up to the altar to be prayed for, I won't go with my arm hooked in the handle of a whiskey-jug!"

It was his turn to catch at a phrase. His arms closed tightly about her, the words came hot and fast:

"If that day ever comes! My darling! why shouldn't it be *this* day? There is such a safe, easy way to avoid what hangs over me like the day of doom! Won't you do this one thing for me to-night? I will come down for you, myself, and take you to the altar. Think what the step will mean to your mother—to the many who love you and pray for your salvation! Think what it will be to *me!* to *us!*"

She shrank from rather than towards him. Her eyes were strangely troubled. Her voice was still gentle,—she was never tart with him,—but inflections he had never heard before were in emphasized words:

"I don't think—I—*quite*—understand! You surely wouldn't have me act a *lie* by going up to be prayed for unless I *feel* that I am a sinner and want to be saved? We've talked all this over often and often, you know. Of course, I know I am a sinner. The Bible says so, and all you good people say so. But, somehow, I can't feel sorrow for sin! I've tried hundreds of times—but I just *can't*. I think"—a gleam that was tender, yet arch, driving the clouds from her eyes—"it's maybe because I'm too happy to be sorry for *anything*. No! no! dear boy, I can't be a hypocrite even to please *you!*"

The implication stung like a whip-lash. With the dignity of his priestly office, buckramed by the smarting vanity of the carnal mind, he put her gently from him and arose to his feet.

"It is useless to prolong a scene that is unspeakably painful to me, whatever it may be to you. Doctor Graves was wiser than I when he warned me to expect nothing from argument and entreaty——"

The blood poured over her face in an angry flood.

"Doctor Graves! What right has he to interfere between us? He may be the Grand Mogul of your Church, but who gave him authority

to touch our—*affair* with the tip of his little finger? I call it rank impertinence! I am surprised that you stood it for one second!"

Another lash! Self-love bled in leaping gushes that thickened articulation when he would be august. "Doctor Graves, as Presiding Elder of the Church I have the honor to serve, is my spiritual leader. He has the right—and has exercised it—to warn me with regard to a step that may militate against my usefulness in the field to which Divine Providence has called me."

"*So-o-o!*" The monosyllable was drawn slowly between lips that barely parted. She was as pale as she had been red just now—white heat that steadied her outwardly. The ruddy lights in her eyes were fires, flickering dangerously near the surface. "You and he have gone to a mighty deal of useless trouble to bring about what I could do with a word—what I would have done in the twinkling of an eye if either of you had given me a hint of what was going on—what I am going to do this blessed minute!" She dropped a ring into his palm with disdainful finger-tips. "Show *that* to him and receive his congratulations! He'd rather see it in your hand and off of mine than to have me walk up the aisle on your arm, dissolved in hypocritical tears, to insult the God of truth in what your Pope calls 'His holy temple'!"

He laid an arm across the doorway as she would have swept forward.

"You will be sorry for this when you come to think it over!"

With precisely the action and flash that had eluded Deacon Harris's touch, she ducked under the barrier, and, sending a scornful laugh over her shoulder as she ran, sped up the alley down which she had come to the tryst.

Sitting in the summer-house, his miserable head between his hands, elbows on his knees, he heard, by and by, the rippling lilt of the negro melody, the dashing piano accompaniment. His nerves were tense wires; every note beat them like a hammer into discords that were anguish.

"God help me!" he said again.

This time it was prayer in very earnest.

And so came on the setting of the sun about which he had cast an awesome spell for the hundreds that withdrew openly to their closets, or slunk secretly, or skulked in superstitious dread, at that very instant.

He, of all who had filled the church that afternoon, gave the weird hour no thought. The copper ball cooled in horizon shadows; all the dew that would fall into the sultry August night softened and sweetened the hearts of flowers; through a gap in the leafy wall of the arbor left by the wilting vines the new moon, a timorous yellow thread, looked in over his left shoulder.

The servant sent by Mrs. Swann to call him to supper saw it and recalled the omen in after days.

The preacher would not take anything to eat, nor must the carriage wait for him at church-time—he preferred to walk.

“‘This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting!’” quoted Mrs. Swann solemnly when the message was repeated to her.

In saying it she glanced at Signora’s empty chair, her swollen eyelids reddening anew. The youngest child and the stupidest servant present knew what was meant by the “kind.” The performances of the afternoon were already a domestic disgrace and a public scandal.

She, with her husband and daughter, had gone early to evening service in order to secure good seats when the front gate closed behind Blair Winfree. The jar shook down a flurry of rose-leaves upon his head and hand. He took off his hat mechanically to brush them from it. The light from an open door fell right across him in the momentary halt. Had he glanced up at a window he knew of he must have descried the shadowy outlines of a figure leaning over the sill.

It leaned out still farther to watch him striding down the village street, his rapid footfall muffled by the dust and the turfy edges of the winding footpath.

It may have been half-an-hour—she could have thought it was half the night—before she lighted a candle and lifted her hands to the flame. A cruel red welt was upon each wrist, as if a hot bracelet had been bound there.

Her father’s words had been crueller as he dashed down the piano-lid. He had called her “a disgrace to any Christian family,” and when she exclaimed at the pain had wished savagely that he had “broken every finger, so she could never play the devil’s tunes again!” Neither her mother nor Mary had come near her to question or to sympathize. Not even the colored mammy, whose pet she had been from her birth, had stolen up to offer healing while she scolded.

“They are all against me!”—a dreary smile torturing the livid lips. “He—and his God are the cruellest of all!”

Blair Winfree preached that night like one inspired, said an admiring audience. His text—and he recurred to it again and again, and yet again, to weld each link of argument, and to rivet each illustration upon the hearer’s minds—was:

“If thy right eye offend thee” (or, as he interpolated, “cause thee to stumble”), “pluck it out and cast it from thee! For it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.”

He was a born orator, and oratory to the native-born Virginian is as the very breath of his nostrils. He added to the gift of oratory the rarer endowment of a personal magnetic charm, interfusing, like a sub-

the essence, speech and tone and glance. People forgot stifling heat, the stench of guttering candles, the hum and swoop of night-flies and cockchafers, while hanging upon his impassioned periods. All three doors were jammed full of men and boys, unable to get even standing-room in the aisles; each of the windows upon two sides of the house showed a row of faces of a corpse-like pallor as seen in the candle-light against the black curtain of the night beyond.

One large window broke the dead blank of the church wall forming the fourth side of the graveyard behind the building. Dick Lowry testified to the day of his death that, glancing for a moment from the preacher's face to the window,—gaping wide for air like all the rest,—he had a fleeting glimpse of a white face dimly defined in the outer darkness. Something about the apparition, which vanished while he glanced, made him scan the congregation to see if Sig Swann were there. He could not distinguish hers among the upturned faces turned, as the visage of one man, towards the pulpit. Many were glazed with tears few could restrain, women choked back hysterical sobs that might lose them one inspired word. When he looked again at the window the black space was empty. There was an incessant play of heat-lightning on the horizon. What he thought he had seen was probably a trick of flash and shadow.

The peroration of the wonderful sermon was a vision of the Christian's heaven as it would be revealed to the soul purged by self-sacrificial fires from earthy stains, glorified and triumphant through redeeming grace:

“When once our heavenly guided souls shall climb,—
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,—
Attired with stars, we shall forever sit,
Triumphing over Death and Chance and thee, O Time!”

The sonorous periods rolled through the church—a shout of victory; the clasped hands were flung above his head in an ecstasy of divine impatience; the upraised face was as the face of a homing angel beholding the opening heavens and catching the music of celestial welcomings.

Still gazing upward—rapt and radiant—he began to sing. His voice—vibrant, powerful, sweet, and pure—filled the house and floated up to the listening stars:

“Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings!
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things
Towards Heaven, thy dwelling-place.”

Sun and moon and stars decay,
Earth shall soon these scenes remove,
Rise, my soul, and soar away,
To seats prepared above!"

The congregation had arisen, swayed by one overpowering, spontaneous impulse; hundreds of voices joined in the shout of aspiration, the glorious organ-peal of the preacher's voice rising above and leading all:

"Rivers to the ocean run,
And stay not in their course;
Fires, ascending, seek the sun,
All haste them to their source,
So, the soul that's born of God——"

A pistol-shot split the outer night. Sound and flash were so near the big window that women shrieked and cowered in the belief that someone in the house had been aimed at—perhaps hit.

The preacher's grand voice—steady and exultant—finished the verse alone:

"Pants to view His glorious face,
Upward tends to His abode,
To rest in His embrace."

The Presiding Elder's benediction—duly said, that all things might be done decently and in order—was in dumb show to the writhing, trampling throng surging towards the doors.

The several streams flowed towards and met at the graveyard fence. Dick Lowry was the first to leap over it, haunted by the recollection of the window-wraith. Other men, who had snatched candles from brackets and pulpit, followed.

She lay under the branchy pine, her head touching the trunk. Her right hand still grasped the pistol she had stolen from her father's desk-drawer. The poor left hand, swollen, discolored,—ringless,—clutched at the heart in which the bullet had lodged. She had pressed the death-dealing muzzle so close and hard that the laces on her breast were burning.

Dick Lowry's hand put out the blaze.

"I couldn't help feeling 'twas her heart that was on fire," blubbered the honest fellow in telling the tale to his sister. "She opened her eyes as I did it and looked full into mine. She knew me, I'm sure, for her lips moved,—as if she tried to smile, don't you know? She was game to the last. God rest her soul!"



THE SIREN

By Churchill Williams

Author of "The Captain," "J. Devlin, Boss," etc.



THE Siren whistle at the Sampson Steel Works told that it was half-past five o'clock in the afternoon. As its quavering cry bit into the hearing a thousand men dropped their tools and flocked from machine and hammer shops, from casting-floor, pit, and furnace mouth. From the doorways of the score of big brick and iron buildings, above which hung a pall of smoke tongued with pallid flames, as many streams of sweating, grimed, and coatless men, empty dinner-pails caught in the bend of their arms, converged and swelled the human tide which poured through the main gate of the yard. With faces set the other way came the stragglers of the night-shift, hurrying to fill the places just left vacant. There was no pause in the roar of machinery and the clash of beaten metal.

Long Jones, the master of the eighty-ton hammer, walked alone. He walked slowly, his rugged face troubled, his keen eyes roving over the men who passed him in little companies, many of them talking in low tones. He answered their greetings with a grave nod of the head.

At the supper-table his landlady, bustling, bright-eyed Mrs. Scott, the little Irishwoman, asked him what was on his mind; she and he were time-sworn friends.

"It is th' men at th' works," he replied; "they've organized to strike for higher wages. There'll be trouble."

Mrs. Scott shook her head wisely. "You'd better be kapin' out of it," she warned.

"I will," he answered, and soon afterwards stalked out in the cooling June twilight and down the street. At the end of three blocks of a double row of monotonous brick-fronted, tiny houses he turned into a building larger than the rest.

This was Potterton's Hall, the meeting-place of the neighborhood. In it now were three hundred or more men, some seated, some standing, hands in breeches pockets; all of them listening to a small, square-shouldered, dark-haired man who was talking from a platform at the far end of the big room. Long Jones knew the speaker at once for one Marks, a hand in the machine-shop at the Works, a man who could do good work, but who was always restless and often in hot water.

Marks did not see Long Jones enter, and he spoke to the men with a confidence born of the belief that his audience was with him. He urged them to assert themselves and demand higher wages under threat. Red and perspiring, he sat down at last amid an excited hum of voices and the beating of applauding feet.

Then, at the very back of the room, rose a tall, gaunt figure with grizzled hair, and asked for the right to speak. Marks recognized Long Jones, and scowled. But he did not dare refuse the request. The giant master of the hammer had won the respect of the men by his hard sense, big heart, and mighty arm. And so Long Jones found all eyes on him and was uncomfortable. Yet he faced what he had to do with dogged resolution.

"I've got a word for you from th' General Manager," he began.

There was a quick indrawing of breath in every part of the room. It was as if the men saw a precipice yawn at their feet.

"Th' General Manager sent for me to-day," Long Jones went on, "and he told me to tell you that th' gates of the Works would be open next week to every man that was *not* a member of this Union, and closed to every man that *was*. That's all he said."

Long Jones came to an abrupt halt. He had given all his message; his task was done. Yet now, looking over the room, he saw many men who were his friends, many whom he pitied because they had other mouths at home to feed that were likely to go hungry. All at once he felt he must speak a word to them for himself. He had stooped to sit down. A silence that was death-like gripped the place. Even the ready-witted Marks was mute for the moment, so sudden had been the blow dealt by the message. So, when Long Jones straightened up, his voice rang on strained ears.

"It's none of my business what you do now," he said. "But you all know I've been at th' Works a good many years, and I want to see you all walking through th' gates of th' Works next week. Th' Siren has been calling you, day in and day out. You've heard it each night and morning. It'll go on whistling just th' same whether it's for you or for someone else. But you don't want to forget that if it ain't *you* it's calling to work next week, it won't be *you* it's calling to th' pay-desk either. You don't want to forget that before it's too late. There'll be many of you, then, that'll want to do its bidding, and'll find th' gates closed."

Long Jones sat down, his furrowed face very red, his gray eyes misty. He ran his fingers through his hair and pulled at his collar, which had grown choking-tight.

Marks in an instant was on his feet speaking. He knew the day was to be won or lost straightway. So he began to play upon the pride of his hearers and to dilate upon the strength of their position. They

were old, trained hands, he told them. It would be impossible for the management of the Works to fill their places at short notice. There were many important contracts to be filled by the mills. The threat of the management was an empty one. He halted. Then, changing his tone from persuasion to warning, he cried, "And what's more, every man at this meeting is marked—except *one*! Th' General Manager has a spy here. You've just seen that for yourselves. You've been told what th' General Manager will do. Th' one that'll give him news of you is the man that's just been speaking. He's a spy!"

The room faced on Long Jones. All at once he had become an outsider to them. To some he was an interloper; to some an enemy.

Long Jones got on his feet. His front was fearless. He did not plumb the depths of Marks's strategy, but he had an itching to knock him down. "I'll do what I please!" he cried defiantly. He was filled with a sudden rage. "And anybody that calls me a spy," he added, "I'll——" He shook his fist at them, choking with wrath.

The threat set the tide against him. He found himself looking into three hundred sullen faces. He did not understand, and his anger grew. So, shaking his fist, challenging them to the last, he strode from the room.

The Siren sounded the noon hour, and the six men, led by Marks, moved up the cinder pathway as if they had never trod the ground before. As a matter of fact, this road, past the pay-office to the General Manager's office, was one they had passed over twice daily for many years. In the outer office of the General Manager they stepped upon one another's toes and fingered their hats uneasily. They were all tongue-tied except Marks. He spoke with an air of assurance that was meant to cover a sense of coming defeat.

"Mr. Parks," he said to the General Manager, "we're asking for a raise of wages."

"You are?" replied the General Manager. He ran his eye over the leaves of a book at his elbow, and called out their names. Then, "How is it that you six men aren't satisfied when all the rest are?" he asked.

"They aren't satisfied either," said Marks. "There's seven hundred men feel just th' way we do."

"Where are they? I don't see them here."

"We represent them," answered Marks.

"Oh, you do! So you pay their wages?"

"No, but—you see, if we six get th' raise, they'll get it too."

"And if you *don't* get the raise?"

"Then they won't get it either. But—but——"

"Yes?"

"Well, we don't want to work at th' wages we're getting now."

"You don't? I see. Well, look here! You're losing valuable time. You might be looking for that better-paying job you're talking about. I won't keep you. Mr. Carne,"—turning to a clerk,—“Mr. Carne, take the names of these men. See that they're paid off. They're discharged!”

The General Manager turned on his heel and disappeared through the doorway into his private office. Marks and his companions remained motionless until the curt voice of the clerk started them out the door.

That afternoon, persuaded that Marks foretold their fate when he said that every man belonging to the Union would be discharged on pay-day next, the seven hundred members struck when the Siren ran up and down the scale at half-past five o'clock. In a long line they filed past the pay-office. And there each one found, accompanying the money due him, a slip of paper bearing the single word “Discharged.”

The men took the situation thus thrust upon them with a pretence of relish which ill-concealed their surprise and anger. And the weight of their resentment fell on Long Jones. They were almost sure now that Marks's statement about spies was correct. But in this they were utterly wrong; and the giant master of the hammer accepted their scowls and ugly words with a silent patience which they mistook for triumph.

But the strike itself spread, and the strikers grew obstinate with the sullenness that comes of the distrust of tradesmen, and of suffering at home, and most of all of the gnawing discontent bred of idleness.

For the mill stacks still unfurled a pall of smoke by day and cast a glow of red by night upon the sky. The rumble and clangor of machinery and the clash of beaten metal dinned upon the ear. Work went on steadily within the big yard. The mills were operated, though with difficulty.

So the thing stood when, one evening in the fifth week of the strike, Potterton's Hall held three hundred ill-tempered men who had come to try to find a way to regain what they had lost, and not one of whom knew how this was to be done. Marks was not there at the hour when the meeting should have been called to order. There was much ugly talk as the minutes slipped by, and yet he did not come. Some of them would have it that he had deserted them. In half an hour the men were on the highway to violent deeds.

But Marks was not idle at this time. Neither had he deserted them. When darkness fell he scaled the high board fence which encircled the buildings of the Works and found the place he sought. It was in the angle formed by the walls of the machine-shop and the “open-hearth” shop, a spot overgrown with weeds, shrouded in the deep shadow cast by the walls. It was a place inaccessible except to one on foot, and unguarded. It exactly suited his purpose.

For fifteen minutes he garnered from the litter of castaway bits of wood. A low pile of inflammable stuff soon hugged the wall of the machine-shop at a point where a great beam ran upward. The machine-shop was built largely of timber. Its floor was soaked with the drippings from machine journals and with the mist of oil. It was so much tinder to a flame set against it and well nourished at the start. It held many thousands of dollars' worth of machinery which it would be impossible to replace at short notice. A fire——!

Marks wagged his head. His eyes gleamed at the prospect. He remembered that the trained fire-fighting force of the Works—famous for its efficiency—was composed of men now waiting for him in Potterton's Hall.

But he was determined to make his purpose sure. So, casting round him for bigger fuel for his pyre, he recalled a stack of oil barrels near by. He scaled the fence which enclosed an oil-cloth factory a few feet away. There he overturned one of the barrels and rolled it to the fence of the Works. It would serve as a ladder from which to hoist another. He went back for this.

At that moment he saw a figure approaching along the pathway by the fence. He dropped among the weeds muttering as he recognized the giant figure of Long Jones.

Then a ferocious courage took possession of him. He crawled through the weeds to the footway. When Long Jones was opposite the barrel up-ended against the fence Marks was at his back, a stone clutched in his fingers.

Long Jones saw the barrel and halted. Marks made a leap. His arm rose and fell. Long Jones pitched on his face, a strangled cry in his throat, and lay still.

Marks listened and looked about him. No one was in sight or hearing. He rolled the second barrel to the fence, hoisted it, and dropped it into the yard of the Works. A minute later he softly scratched a match, ignited the pile of wood, and fled.

He was running up the steps of Potterton's Hall when the bass notes of the Siren fell upon his ears in a wail of sullen alarm.

While Marks was yet rolling the second barrel to his bonfire Long Jones stretched an arm and groaned. A numbness at his forehead drew his hand there. He brought it away wet with something warm. It was a full minute before his returning senses helped him to an understanding of where he was. Then he slowly got to his feet, knowing that he was hurt and needed aid.

Across the waste land, two hundred yards away, was a string of lights—the lamp-posts of the street on which he lived. Almost coming to his knees at times, he made his way to the lights and at last stumbled on the doorstep of Mrs. Scott's house.

The little Irishwoman heard his fall and, stout of heart and quick to act, soon had him in a chair in the kitchen. There, with deft fingers, she washed the wound on his head and bound it up. Long Jones, his strength returning to him, lay back and thanked her with grateful looks.

She was pinning the bandage firmly at the back of his head when the air thrilled with a low, thrumming growl. She paused to listen. Almost since her girlhood days this sound had had significance for her above all else. At this time it could have but one meaning. It was an alarm.

Long Jones felt her fingers halt and wondered. Then above the surging of the blood, as it beat with trip-hammer blows at his temples, he heard the humming. Now it grew and sharpened.

He started, head erect. He drank in the sound with nostrils distended. A dozen times his heart beat before he was sure he heard aright. The next instant he had sprung to his feet and was out of the door, his legs carrying him weakly at first, then more stoutly as he strung his muscles with the thought of what he must do and where he must go.

In Potterton's Hall Marks had succeeded in gaining the platform. He was crying for order, when the door was dashed open, and Long Jones ran in, his head swathed in bandages, his face working with excitement, one arm up-thrown. He sprang to a chair and silenced the clamor with a cry.

"Th' Siren, boys! Don't you hear her? It's th' fire-alarm! Th' Works is on fire! They're burning up! Hear her! Hear th' Siren!"

He paused. The hoarse booming of the great whistle, sullenly responding to the steam that poured into its throat, swelled and rose in pitch. Now it was the thrumming of a giant bass-viol; now a bugle call, marking the crescendo,—rising! rising! rising, until, in a shriek which pierced like needles, it dropped abruptly into a mighty, bellowing note of alarm.

The men were as stone. Long Jones, his head turned slightly, his arm upraised, stood motionless, silent, hearkening.

All at once a chorus of hoarse cries broke out. The men began to shuffle their feet. A hundred voices shouted as many things.

Long Jones leaped from his chair. With a cry—the cry of the fire-brigade which he had led at the Works—he ran for the door. As he started, three hundred men were in full cry at his heels, out into the night and across the fields—the echo of his cry on their lips.

Marks stood alone.

Empty-handed, beaten,—the bare room, a chair here and there overturned, marking the ruin of the edifice which he had raised craftily and

patiently to his own undoing; in his ears the mocking trill of that mighty pitch-pipe which had struck the keynote of the edifice's weakness and brought it tumbling about him.

Across the fields where the walls and chimneys of the Works loomed stark against the sky those who had deserted him were swarming in and about the burning machine-shop. Under the eye of the General Manager they fought the fire.

Above them, now humming like a million bees, now sounding the clarion for a fresh charge upon the swirling flame, now screaming in triumph as they gained ground, and again, in organ notes, repeating its alarm, the Siren called them to the work which was theirs to do.



AT THE CLOSE OF DAY

BY INGRAM CROCKETT

WHAT time the day doth softly close,
I hear the peeper's piccolos,
While in the west a flame of rose
Upon the hilltop lingers—
And through the dusk the fieldlark's flute
Blown softly o'er the meadows mute,—
And then the meadow brook, a lute
Touched by a fairy's fingers.

And from the fading glow above
I hear a mellow call of love,
The "good-night" of the mourning dove—
And then a far replying.
And then the moon lifts low and large,
Like some dead Titan's golden targe,
Above the river's mystic marge
Among the willows sighing.

And then the darkness, and the still
Sweet sense of sleep on wood and hill—
The dream, the beauty that doth fill
The soul with nameless longing—
The homeward path, the cedars tall,
That with their runic music call—
And like the lights in some vast hall
The stars above me thronging.

THE MAN WITH THE BLACK SPECTACLES

By William Le Queux

Author of "The Sign of the Seven Sins"



I DON'T know whether I really ought to reveal a secret which concerns one of the European Courts, but strange rumors having been spread abroad of late, I think it only just that I should set all doubts at rest by telling the truth, at the same time, of course, concealing the identity of the real persons indicated. The facts, as you will see, form a very strange story, but surely there are no circumstances half so strange in fiction as those which are constantly occurring around us every day.

We met in the hall of the Grand Hotel at San Remo five seasons ago. The expensive little Italian town was in festa for Carnival, and I recollect I had been elected one of the judges at the Battle of Flowers. In the idle hour after luncheon I was lounging in the big hall of the hotel smoking and gossiping with a couple of other male visitors, one English and the other French, when the big doors were suddenly thrown open, and from the hotel 'bus there descended a thin, gray-faced, weary-looking man, prematurely aged and wearing gold-rimmed spectacles of smoked glass. When he saw me he started, his countenance went white to the lips, and he drew back as though he had recognized in myself some person whom he had no desire to meet.

Only for an instant, however; nevertheless, his action puzzled me greatly, and I remarked to my English friend that there seemed something peculiar about the new arrival.

"My dear fellow, one never knows who one meets in Riviera hotels," he said. "Here, in the vicinity of Monte Carlo, all the thieves and black-coated blackguards of Europe congregate in winter. Why, last season, in Nice, I met at my hotel a wealthy Spaniard whom I thought a most excellent fellow, until one day the police stopped us together in the Avenue de la Gare and arrested him for murdering a man in Barcelona. Great shock for me, as you may imagine. No, my dear sir, experience has taught me to be very careful with whom I associate on the Riviera."

Provincial tradesmen from home are persons to be avoided equally with the smartly dressed adventurers, male and female, who crowd

everywhere. Hence it was that, recollecting my friend's warning, I looked askance at the new-comer, whom I at once knew to be German on account of his accent in speaking to the waiter. I have, I regret to state it, no great love for the travelling German, therefore my annoyance was increased when at dinner that night I found him seated next me, but he passed no remark all through the meal. Later, however, I glanced at the register and found that his name was Heinrich Watzdorf, of Essingen, in Wurtemberg. That told me nothing, for if he were an adventurer, he would scarcely sign his proper name.

Next day I became on speaking terms with him. It was the day of the Battle of Flowers, and as all the seats were sold, I invited him into the judges' box beside me. The judging at San Remo, as at Nice and Cannes, is done by an international committee composed of representatives of nearly every European nation, and the prizes for the best decorated carriages are sums of money, in addition to beautifully painted silken banners. The February afternoon was perfect, with brilliant sunshine and blue sea. Everywhere the little town was decorated, and along its narrow principal street—very much like the High Street of one of our own smaller towns—the Battle of Flowers was waged with delight by the crowds of wintering foreigners and holiday-making Sanramese.

We stood together looking down upon the gay, animated scene as the people pelted one another with bouquets, but my German friend made few remarks, and from his words I gathered that Carnival in the South was to him no new experience, for he seemed essentially a cosmopolitan. Suddenly, however, there appeared a smart victoria drawn by a pair of well-matched grays, the carriage being literally hidden by masses of pink carnations, even to the wheels, while built over was a canopy of the same sweet-smelling flowers, an arrangement of blossoms that could not have cost a penny less than a hundred pounds. Upon the horses were long ribbons of the Italian colors, red, white, and green, and within the carriage sat an extremely handsome, dark-haired woman of perhaps thirty-five, exquisitely dressed in the same shade as the flowers around her, while beside her sat a sweet-faced little lad of about eight years old,—her son, evidently.

As she came along smiling, now and then tossing a bouquet of violets here and there, a chorus of admiration broke from the crowd.

"Brava! brava!" they cried, and everyone at once asked his neighbor who was the beautiful stranger.

Nobody knew. We in the judges' box at once agreed that she should be given the first prize of three thousand francs for the best-decorated carriage. But the procession did not halt, and she passed by triumphantly, smiling at me and at the others.

Just as she passed she caught sight of Watzdorf, and in an instant

her countenance betrayed surprise. As their eyes met he had raised his hat to her, and for a moment stood holding it in his hand. He bowed, and then a faint smile showed at the corners of her mouth, while her son, too much occupied with the pelting of violets, noticed nothing.

Then my German friend made a strange, half-imperious gesture of the hand, which she evidently understood, for she reluctantly, almost wistfully, turned from him with a deep sorrow in her great, dark eyes. Yes, I felt sure that grief was hidden there, for in an instant her eyes were filled with tears, and she turned away from us to hide them as her carriage went forward and out of sight.

My companions had not noticed this, and the man with the black spectacles believed that he had been unobserved.

"Pretty woman, that!" I remarked casually to him in English, a language he spoke exceedingly well.

"Yes," was his answer in a low, hard voice, and his mouth shut with almost a snap.

I expressed wonder as to her identity and admiration of the taste with which her carriage was decorated, but he told me nothing regarding her, although I felt certain they were well acquainted. He stood looking after her wistfully for quite a long time, then turning away, threw himself into a chair, and lit a cigarette.

For an hour the judges stood watching for her return in order to present her with the banner, but she did not reappear, and everyone fell to wondering.

At length Prince Poninski, president of the Fêtes Committee, asked:

"Why does not the lady with the carnations return? We must give her the first prize, for the decoration surpasses everything I have ever seen at these battles. Does anyone know her?"

All replied in the negative, when, rising suddenly, the German exclaimed:

"Yes, I am acquainted with the lady, Prince. But, being desirous of preserving her incognito, she desires me to say that if you award her any money prize she will esteem it a favor if you will kindly hand the sum over to one of the charities of San Remo—whichever you may think proper."

He refused to satisfy our curiosity concerning her.

At table d'hôte that night Watzdorf's place remained unoccupied, and afterwards, when I inquired of the hall-porter whether he had returned, the man replied:

"M'sieur came back hurriedly just after dinner commenced, paid his bill, and left. He wrote a note to you. Here it is."

I opened the hurriedly scribbled message and found it to read:

"DEAR MR. LETLAND: I have to thank you for your kindness to me during my short stay in San Remo, and 'the Lady of the Carnations' likewise wishes me to express her acknowledgments to you, as a member of the Committee, in acceding to her request. I trust that we shall meet again some day, and that we shall then know each other better. Yours truly,

"HEINRICH WATZDORF."

He had left for Genoa, I was told. Was he, after all, an adventurer, as I suspected? This sudden flight seemed almost as though he had for some reason become alarmed, especially as he had taken his room for a month and had paid for it before leaving.

Winter ended, and as a diplomatic freelance I drifted hither and thither across the Continent, often on secret missions that would have been perilous to my own personal safety had their real object been known.

In the following winter I chanced to be in Petersburg making some delicate inquiries regarding the latest diplomatic move on the part of Russia and France, and had succeeded, through the instrumentality of a certain person in our pay in the Russian Ministry of War—who must, however, be nameless—in obtaining a copy of some highly important confidential correspondence between the Ministry and the Quai d'Orsay, together with tracings of certain plans of proposed defences that were a profound secret.

These I received from my Russian friend one evening about six o'clock in Donon's restaurant at Pevcheski Most, and at eight o'clock, with those precious papers secreted in the lining of my coat, I alighted at the railway station to catch the homeward Nord Express for Ostend and London when I was suddenly surrounded by several detectives and arrested as a spy!

My heart sank, for someone had betrayed me! Knowing well that our Embassy was powerless to intercede on my behalf, secret agents not being recognized by any government, I had only before me the prospect of a long sojourn in a Russian prison—a sojourn in all probability for life.

I was replaced in the drosky, driven to the head police-office, and upon being searched the incriminating documents were, of course, discovered.

Three terribly anxious days and nights I spent in a dismal prison cell, feeling that my life had suddenly come to an end.

My anxiety of mind may be well imagined, for the knowledge that all was over, and only exile to Saghalien was before me, killed within me every hope. On the fourth night, however, my gaoler, a big-bearded ruffian of uncouth manner and colossal strength, opened my cell-door and ordered me to prepare myself for a long journey—to Siberia, I

knew. The Russian Government had at that time an unpleasant mode of sending prisoners to Nerchinsk or Tobolsk without formal trial.

So I dressed, put on my overcoat and hat, and ate a little of the hot cabbage soup that had been brought me. Then I was driven to the railway station, a police officer in plain clothes accompanying me.

I descended, when to my utter bewilderment I was greeted by no other person than the mysterious German, Heinrich Watzdorf, but without his disfiguring spectacles, and as he shook hands with me warmly the police officer slipped away and disappeared. I was alone with my friend—alone, and at liberty!

"Come, Mr. Leyland," he cried, "you have no time to lose. The express is just starting. Here is your ticket for London, a passport, and a little money. Do not return to Russia—promise me,—never."

"I promise," I said, utterly beside myself with the sudden joy. "But what does this mean? Is my liberty due to you?"

"Some day I may perhaps ask a favor of you in return," was all he replied, smiling. "We are friends, are we not?"

"Yes," I answered, giving him my hand. "Yes,—firm friends."

"Then adieu, and bon voyage," he exclaimed. And an instant later the train-de-luxe moved off on its long journey across the snow-bound plains of Western Russia—homeward.

Two whole years passed.

That Heinrich Watzdorf was really a homeless wanderer was proved in a rather curious way. I was sitting one summer's evening under the trees in the Vauxhall Gardens at Brussels, listening to the fine orchestra concert, enjoying the cool air after the heat of the day, and chatting to Captain Harold Beaufort, one of our Foreign Service messengers, who was waiting in the Belgian capital until the morrow for an important despatch from the Embassy. Suddenly, while watching the crowd of promenaders during the interval, he exclaimed:

"Look! There's a fellow I know named Schomberg. See, the one with the light felt hat and black spectacles—just gone along there! He's a bit of a mystery. I've met him in all sorts of out-of-the-way places. Always travelling! Wanted by the police, perhaps."

I looked, and to my surprise saw the mysterious German in evening dress, wearing a gray felt hat and with his spectacles, calmly smoking and strolling on with the crowd.

My first impulse was to rush after and greet him, but, resolving to wait for him to repass the table whereat we were, I reseated myself and remained with watchful eyes upon the crowd.

Contrary to my expectations, however, he did not return. I had seen his thin, sparse, melancholy figure moving slowly along in the shadow, the red end of his cigar glowing in the darkness, and it struck me more forcibly than ever that he was a man with a secret.

A fortnight later we met face to face in the Avenue de l'Opera in Paris. He was blinking through his spectacles into Brentano's shop-window, and I went boldly up and greeted him warmly.

Dressed just a trifle more shabbily than usual, he seemed, I thought, even sadder than before. At any rate, his thin, wan face was paler, even though he grasped my hand and congratulated me on my continued safety. Then, for the first time, I recollected that he was the only man who knew my true calling—that my future was in his hands!

I invited him to dinner at my hotel, the Terminus, that night, but he refused, expressing his deep regret that he was leaving Paris that evening for London.

I too was returning home, so we left the Gare du Nord by the night service for London, and after a rather "dirty" crossing arrived at early morning at Charing Cross. So careful was he to avoid meeting people, and so suspicious of everyone, that I came to the conclusion that he was, after all, a fugitive from justice. Yet such a thoroughly good fellow did I find him that upon our arrival in town I had invited him to come and stay with me at my rooms in Guilford Street, Bloomsbury. To this, however, he merely replied:

"It's really very kind of you, my dear friend. But I have relations in London, and must stay with them. I will meet you to-morrow evening. Where shall we say? At High Street, Kensington, railway station—would that suit you? If so, I shall be in the refreshment bar at eight o'clock."

"Delighted!" was my response, for I was determined to penetrate the veil of mystery surrounding him. If he were actually a foreign spy in England, then it was surely my duty to ascertain the reason of his visit to London. "We may, perhaps, go on to the St. James's Club and have a smoke," I added.

Then amid the bustle of arrival at Charing Cross in the gray of dawn we shook hands and parted.

Next evening, just before eight, I entered the long refreshment bar of the station of the Underground Railway at High Street, Kensington, and found the cosmopolitan in his gold-rimmed spectacles awaiting me.

"What I want you to witness may appear to you curious," he said presently, after we had drunk together, he still betraying a suspicion of everyone. "I first must ask you, however, to give me your word of honor to preserve in strictest secrecy all that you see and hear until—until after my death."

"Your death!" I cried. "You surely don't anticipate it just yet?"

His face relaxed into that strange, sphinx-like smile of his, but he made no response, except to ask,—

"Have I your promise?"

I gave him my hand in response, and assured him that I should

always respect any confidences he reposed in me. His manner had impressed me that he was in sore trouble. Yet he knew my real profession was that of secret agent of the British Government, and such knowledge gave him distinct advantage over me.

"Then recollect that of what you see and hear to-night you utter no word. Your lips are absolutely sealed until my death." And he paid for the brandy we had had, and we both entered a cab which was awaiting him outside.

Our drive was not a long one, for the house before which we stopped was in the quiet part of Kensington—a large detached place, old-fashioned and comfortable.

To my surprise, after glancing up and down as though fearful of observation, my friend let himself in with the latch-key, and to my astonishment I found that the interior was the very acme of taste and luxury. At his suggestion I threw off my coat and followed him into the drawing-room, a large, handsome apartment, where the electric light was tempered by soft, shaded silk, and the air was heavy with the perfume of flowers.

A lady, dressed exquisitely in a dinner-gown of turquoise blue and wearing a magnificent pearl necklet, rose to bow to me, and as I encountered her I instantly recognized her to be the Lady of the Carnations, the prize-winner at San Remo!

"Allow me to introduce you to my wife—Mr. Leyland," exclaimed my friend, removing his spectacles and wiping them.

This surprised me, for I had no idea the wanderer was married. Nevertheless, I bowed, saying:

"I am most delighted to make Madame Watzdorf's acquaintance. I recollect her great success at San Remo"—and looking round, I saw that in the room were two big old punch-bowls filled with pink carnations, her favorite flower.

She smiled and invited me to be seated. She was a well-bred, charming woman, full of grace and sweetness, and in a little while we all three drew near the fire, the pretty child made his appearance—my friend's son, I learned—and thus did I find myself one of that secret family circle.

Her husband had become much brighter, and was evidently most devoted to her. She allowed us cigarettes, declaring herself fond of tobacco at times, but in secret.

"I have heard so much of you from my husband, Mr. Leyland, that I almost felt I knew you quite well," she said to me. "To me this meeting is really most gratifying."

The old butler, evidently a confidential servant, entered presently in response to Madame's summons, and she gave him an order. In a few moments his father kissed little Heinrich "good-night." Then

with his hand on the boy's dark, curly head, he sighed, adding in German:

"Good-by, my darling. May God protect both you and your dear mother if we never meet again."

"But surely you aren't going away again, father?" exclaimed the child with a disappointed look. "Mother told me to-day that you were going to spend a whole week with us, as you did last year at Biarritz."

"Yes, child. I am very sorry," the man sighed, "but I must go. I dare not stay," he added under his breath.

Then both child and mother burst into tears at this announcement, and hand in hand they slowly left the room.

Watzdorf swallowed the lump in his throat, and turning to me he said:

"I must apologize, my dear Leyland, for thus thrusting my private affairs upon you. The motive of it will one day, perhaps, be apparent to you."

The reason of his continued wandering on the Continent while his wife lived there alone and yet in affluence puzzled me. To me he was a profound mystery from every point of view. He seemed haunted by the shadow of some crime.

"Is it really imperative that you leave again to-morrow?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered in a hard voice. "I am compelled to wander—wander always. Ah!" he sighed, "my poor Louise! It is a cruel fate that keeps us apart—a cruel fate indeed!" And for a moment his chin fell upon his breast as he slowly paced up and down the handsome room.

Suddenly, however, he roused himself and invited me into the study, where he closed the door, locked it, and, having mixed me a drink, raised his glass to me. Then he said quite seriously:

"Leyland, I know that you are a secret agent in the employ of the British Foreign Office—a man of all others whom I ought to avoid, for you are an investigator of secrets. No doubt you regard me as a mystery. Well, I scarcely wonder. You have seen to-night the tragedy of my life,—you have seen my dear Louise and my child, from whom a hard fate keeps me apart,—yet you have given your word of honor to breathe no word of it to any living soul. Now I wonder if you would accept from me a little commission? It is not much I ask of you." And he unlocked his despatch-box, which, still in its battered leather travelling-case, stood upon a side-table, and from it drew forth a packet sealed with five formidable black seals bearing a fine coat of arms. "You see this? Well, I wish you to hold it until my death. When I am gone, break the seal and act in accordance with the directions I have written. Recollect when you open it that it is a dead man who is speaking—a man who has been your friend."

Again I promised, and taking the envelope gave him my firm hand-grasp.

"To-morrow I leave Euston for New York on a very long journey. Ah Leyland! you are the only person who knows of my burden of sorrow—you are the only man in whom I can implicitly place my trust."

A tear stood in my friend's eye, and my heart went out towards him. My position there was painful, and I was glad when I could excuse myself, yet not before Watzdorf's wife, her eyes showing traces of tears, returned, and her hunted husband said in a tender voice, his hand upon his wife's shoulder :

"Louise, my love, if anything occurs to me, our friend, Mr. Leyland, will act in your interests. I have given him the documents that I prepared."

In a calm, sweet voice Madame expressed her heartfelt thanks, and, shaking both their hands, I went forth into the hall, where the white-haired old butler assisted me.

"I will write you, Leyland, as soon as I land!" cried Watzdorf after me. "Good-by!"

Then I went forth into the dark, deserted road, and walked through several long streets with which I was entirely unacquainted until I found myself in Cromwell Road. Then, and only then, did it suddenly flash across my mind that I had taken no note of either the road or the house where lived the Wanderer's wife!

One Saturday night in June last year I was back in my own rooms in Guilford Street, resting after some secret inquiries in Belgrade, when by the last post came a letter, dated from an unknown hotel in the Euston Road, asking me to call there as soon as possible, and signed "Heinrich Watzdorf."

All the recollections of those strange incidents of the past crowded upon me, and, anxious to again meet the man who had once befriended me, I lost no time in going to the address given.

The place consisted of two dingy private houses that had been turned into an hotel, and when I asked for my friend a slatternly maid-servant showed me up to No. 6, a room on the second floor.

A light was burning within, and I rapped at the door. Then I turned the handle and, finding the door unlocked, entered.

The room was very poorly furnished, and crouched in a heap on the bed lay my friend, fully dressed, still wearing the black spectacles—but dead!

The sensation this discovery created, the arrival of the police, and other similar circumstances need not be here described. Suffice it to say that at the inquest held on the following day I gave evidence of identification, while the police-surgeon certified that death was due to heart-disease.

From my bank I obtained the sealed packet, and alone in my room I broke it open and examined its contents. What was written therein held me astounded.

The words he had penned placed me on the track of a remarkable secret—one that had for years been hidden from the world. Feeling that no time should be lost, I made certain inquiries at the Foreign Office, and then left London that same night for Germany. Three nights later, after travelling by Mulhausen and Weimar, I arrived at the great Castle of Tautenburg, that magnificent place, half fortress, half palace, perched high above the winding Saale, one of the many residences of his Serene Highness the Grand-Duke Frederic of Saxe-Schwazbourg, the wealthiest and most influential ruler in the Thuringian States.

My demand to have audience of his Highness was received with some surprise by the Chamberlain, but I produced a certain paper from the sealed packet and, placing it in an envelope as the dead man had directed, requested the official to hand it to his master. This was done, whereupon I was at once admitted to the cosy private cabinet wherein stood awaiting me the Grand-Duke himself—a tall, dark-bearded man about forty-five, in handsome uniform and wearing the Black Eagle and the Russian Order of St. Andrew, for an official dinner had just ended.

He started the instant he set eyes upon me, while my surprise was quite equal to his, for his face was the exact counterpart of my dead friend Watzdorf's!

His brows knit themselves, and he inquired my name sharply in English.

"I am George Leyland, your Highness, of his Britannic Majesty's diplomatic service."

"Leyland!" he repeated, still suspicious. "Well, why, pray, have you asked audience of me?"

"To deliver to you this packet," I answered. And drawing from my overcoat a sealed envelope which had been contained in the larger one Watzdorf had given me I handed it to him. His fingers trembled as he opened it, and his thin, gray face grew paler.

He motioned me to a chair, and then, seating himself at the writing-table, broke the seals and read the contents.

"Then poor Heinrich is dead!" he exclaimed, with voice hoarse with emotion as he turned to me. "My poor brother!" he repeated. "My poor brother! Ah Mr. Leyland, this is indeed sad. Forgive me for doubting you, but I had reason to think that you were none other than the man who had ruined his life, Louis de Castelane—the enemy of my house. You are exactly like him—almost his double, I think. But tell me all that you know of poor Heinrich, and of the unfortunate Princess, his wife."

And while the Grand-Duke sat listening, sighing now and then, I told him all, just as I have written it down here.

Then, when I had finished, I asked his Highness to supplement the facts of which I was already in possession—the facts contained in my dead friend's letter. First extracting from me a promise of secrecy, he then explained that the man whom I had known as Watzdorf was none other than his elder brother, Prince Heinrich Charles Alexander Hermann, of Saxe-Schwazbourg, who for eleven years had been missing, and who was believed by the world to have committed suicide under very tragic circumstances.

It appeared that eleven years ago their father, the Grand-Duke George, was still alive, and on Heinrich announcing his intention of marrying her Serene Highness the Princess Feodore-Louise of Weimar-Lippe, the proud old ruler would not hear of such an alliance. Between the Grand-Duchies had existed a deadly feud for generations, and Heinrich's intention being bruited abroad, political excitement ran very high and a serious conspiracy was formed to prevent the alliance. Prince Heinrich, heir to the Grand-Duchy, was, however, devoted to the Princess Feodore, and after a very stormy scene with the reigning Grand-Duke left the Palace and was married in Berlin. The same day that news of the marriage reached Tautenburg the ruler issued a proclamation condemning his son's actions in strongest terms, whereupon a hot-headed young Frenchman named Louis de Castelane, a fierce partisan of Heinrich's, assassinated the Grand-Duke by deliberately shooting him with a rifle as he rode home from hunting, afterwards escaping into the forest.

It seemed that Heinrich had secretly countenanced a conspiracy by which his father was to be forced to abdicate, and that he should succeed, but he had no idea that the Grand-Duke was to be shot. He was, however, morally responsible for his father's death, and when the news reached him two days later in Vienna, whither he had gone with his bride, he was so overcome with remorse that he resolved never to return again to Saxe-Schwazbourg, and hit upon the device of pretending to commit suicide and afterwards effacing the identity of both himself and his wife, in order to allow his brother to succeed him. This he accomplished. Some of his clothing and valuables were discovered next day on the bank of the Danube about six miles from Vienna, the papers announced his death, and from that moment until the present nothing had been seen or heard of either husband or wife.

The secret organizations of which Louis de Castelane was the tool were, however, unconvinced of Heinrich's death, and for years had been actively engaged in trying to discover traces of the Prince or his wife. Knowledge that they were being continually hunted had evidently kept the pair apart, for while the Princess Feodore had lived a

lonely life in London, Heinrich travelled constantly in order to avoid the inquiries of both partisans and enemies. It has since been proved that the only person aware of the secret of Heinrich's continued existence was the present Czar, who had been one of his most intimate friends, and to my friend's personal intercession I, of course, attribute my mysterious release from prison in Petersburg. My personal resemblance to the political agitator, Castelane,—who, by the way, died in Paris a year ago,—was the reason of Heinrich's surprise on our first encounter, for he at first believed that he had been recognized.

His Serene Highness, in acknowledgment of my promise of secrecy, took me entirely into his confidence, and, as he gave me further details of the strange romance, showed me certain passages the dead man had written which proved how deeply both he and his bride had suffered in their continual estrangement.

The chief and most important document, however, that I had given into his hand was the certificate of the birth in London ten years ago of little Prince Heinrich, who was, of course, none other than the actual Hereditary Grand-Duke of Saxe-Schwazbourg.

I need, I think, give no actual details of my long, eager search for the widowed Princess in London at his Serene Highness's request, nor of how I at last discovered that the quiet thoroughfare where she lived in Earl's Court was Pembroke Road, and of how I ultimately found her living at Sheringham, in Norfolk, with her little son and utterly ignorant of the sudden decease of the man she so dearly loved.

The scene when I broke the news to her was too sad to be described here.

Suffice it to say that after a year of mourning she has now resumed her title, and with her son lives at the Castle of Tautenburg, which the reigning Grand-Duke has given up for her use and where I have quite recently been her guest.

I noticed in the papers the other day a rumor that she will probably marry a son of the royal house of Savoy, but I may add that I have reason to know that she will never remarry, her whole life being devoted to the education of her little, round-faced Heinrich, who, on the death of his uncle, will become one of the most wealthy and influential of the Grand-Dukes of Europe.

The other day, before I left the Castle, her Serene Highness presented me with a relic of her devoted and well-beloved husband, the signet-ring of his royal house, which he had worn until that day when sorrow and remorse had fallen upon him. The ring, an antique gold one, is now upon my finger, a souvenir of the man who, knowing that death must overtake him suddenly, singled me out as his friend—The Man with the Black Spectacles.

CUPID IN THE HORSE-CAMP

By Edward Boltwood



I.

"HOW often must I tell you this, Rose? How often must I ask you? And won't you answer?"

"No—unless——"

"Unless what?"

"Unless you make me."

Young Barrett looked helplessly at the challenge dancing in Miss Carson's gray eyes, and lashed his boot with a riding-crop.

"An Eastern riding-crop in the Dakota Bad Lands!" said the girl, with an airy change of subject. "I'm perplexed that brother Jack permits such a thing on our ranch."

Indeed, the situation that autumn at the Cross-F Ranch was one of perplexity all around. Jack Carson's friend Barrett had come out from New York to learn the business and, if he liked it, to buy a share in the Cross-F herd. Unsuspected by Carson, Barrett had straightway fallen in love with Rose, and there was no prospect of his ever falling out. Therefore Barrett wouldn't decide the business question, and this perplexed Jack. Rose wouldn't decide the matrimonial question, and this perplexed Barrett. Barrett couldn't compel her to decide it, and this secretly perplexed Rose far more than she was willing to confess. If Barrett suffered from her instinctive, unaffected coquetry, she herself was suffering in the same cause.

Rose Carson was straight as a Black Hills pine; in her handsome face lived a defiant spirit which sometimes flashed a bewildering message to Barrett, "Oh my lover, make me acknowledge that I love you!" She was good to look upon. So, for that matter, was Barrett. From every worldly point of view the match was logical, which was, perhaps, the reason why it was drifting into the clouds of impossibility.

"I can't take a pistol to your head. If I knew how to force you to say yes or no, don't you think I'd do it?" he demanded desperately.

"I don't see the need of yes or no—yet," said Miss Carson. "You know you can be so philosophical about it."

To tell the truth, Barrett's calm philosophy irritated her not a little. It was painfully un-Western.

II.

EARLY in November Carson smelled snow, and sent Barrett miles away up Medicine Creek to tend the horse-camp until April. There Barrett met Sweetie McCue for the first time. The men lived in a grimy dug-out, burrowed into the south slant of a hillside, and morning and evening they rode the long circuit of the barbed-wire pasture fence. Whenever the grass was frost-killed they pitched hay sparingly from the enormous brown stacks into the hay-corral, while the two hundred shelterless ponies squealed and fought at the barrier.

The isolation soothed Barrett's Eastern sentimentality. Miss Carson was spending the winter with her brother at the ranch, nearly a day's ride distant.

Barrett brought ten pounds of Durham to the horse-camp, to which store of solace he bade McCue welcome. The grizzled cow-puncher, after the fine custom of his kind, thanked Barrett by deed and not by word: he quietly took upon himself the duties of their simple cookery. When Barrett objected to this Sweetie said:

"You kin have yer shift later on, young feller. Reckon you'll be glad of it too, come spring. I was in horse-camps afore."

McCue produced a tattered pack of cards. They played pitch for coffee-beans until they could tell by its back every card of the fifty-two. Then in the middle of a game Barrett threw down his hand and complained of the lantern light. McCue recognized the symptoms and in silence wrapped up the pack for the winter. At sunrise McCue called from his blankets,—

"Yer turn to fry the chuck, mister," and Barrett jumped to the cooking with glad relief.

Once McCue found Barrett ransacking his clothes-bag.

"Lost whatever?" asked Sweetie.

"No," said Barrett, "I was just looking for something to read."

That night, while Barrett lingered over the dish-washing, McCue, disdainful of a prelude, burst into the ballad of "The Old Texas Trail." There are thirty-six verses to this diverting epic, and McCue bawled them relentlessly, squaring his lumpy shoulders to the task. He was an enormous, raw-boned man, with very dull eyes and an ominous angle to his jaw,—

"In a narrer grave,
Just six by three,
They buried him there,
On the lone prairie."

This started the story-telling. McCue's yarns were in the ballad form, which survives in its purity in the fore-castle and about the round-up wagon. His list was not large—"The Cottonwood Cabin," "The Girl in San Antone," "The Arizona Vagabound,"—

Cupid in the Horse-Camp

"And so I tells you, stranger,
When you asks who I am,
That a Arizona Vagabound
Ain't worth a damn."

The songs reeked with melancholy. Barrett tried to remember cheering anecdotes from "Pickwick" or "Charles O'Malley." Sweetie listened with solemn courtesy, but it was apparent that he was untouched. Every story was to him a serious reality, and from his standpoint Sam Weller, in Barrett's bald narrative, was merely an insignificant and somewhat weak-minded bunco man, who would have been kicked summarily out of any cow-camp on the Belle Fourche.

"I know a story about a fellow and a girl," said Barrett one morning. He had ascertained that Sweetie was not aware of Miss Carson's existence.

"Let her go," responded McCue politely.

"He loved her, and she loved him, and she couldn't make up her mind. So he went away——"

"Pull in right there. What fer couldn't she make up her mind?"

"Because they agreed that they were—oh, different."

"Huh," commented McCue. "Kinder ornery, ain't it? What was the names o' that outfit?"

"The girl's name was Rose—Rosabella," Barrett said.

"Well, the feller must 'a' been a Mexican."

"Why?"

"'Cause he didn't have no sand in his neck," replied Sweetie.

"'Cause he'd oughter 'a' married that gal on the jump-off. He wanted her, didn't he? She wanted him, didn't she? Then——"

"She couldn't decide, I tell you."

McCue wagged his bristling head, unable to express himself, but after supper the debate was resumed.

"Now, about that there Rosabella," said McCue almost fiercely. "I'd 'a' took and waltzed her off to a parson, way she'd like fer to have me do. Else, by the crackin' Jingo! she'd give me the why not, good and flat and no copper on the card. She wouldn't keep little old McCue a-danglin' like a locoed calf, not if I had the courtin' of her."

"Suppose we two were courting her," said Barrett. The whimsicality of the contention laid strong hold on him. "Suppose we were courting her. I play the waiting game and you the other. Well, she won't answer, and she argues——"

"Argues!" shouted McCue. "To red blazes with argues! I'd just nat'rally rear up and get action." The two lonely men pounced upon the controversy with increasing eagerness.

Occasionally the snow fell in malicious flurries, but it thawed as speedily. Barrett hoped for the diversion of a physical hardship, and

hoped in vain. To find a break in the fence was an excitement long remembered, and sometimes a herd of steers, wild from cold and starvation, would burst through the barbed wire into the pasture and must be driven out. In the weary intervals between these pastimes the pair fell back on the drama of Rosabella.

"I seen her to-day," McCue might remark. "Rosabella! Ain't that a high-priced name, though? Her and me had a chin while you was gone."

And Barrett would answer: "But, of course, you settled nothing. How could you? She's only flirting with herself and us."

In these fantastic arguments Sweetie was no match for Barrett's imaginative facility. Barrett would not have been so ingenious had he been experienced in the mental freaks of solitude. The Easterner goaded his dull-eyed comrade to strange frenzies by dwelling on Rosabella's obstinate and unyielding coquetry. McCue would stick out his jaw and growl:

"You keep yer shirt on. 'I'll show you how much this dang flirting's good fer. Rosabella, she's plumb got to choose her brand."

During January a chill drizzle of rain set in, holding the men in their kennel for three days, during which they wrangled incessantly, if jocosely, about Rosabella. On the third morning Barrett noted that McCue had provided an extra plate at breakfast.

"Expecting company?" queried Barrett.

"I reckoned she might drop in to talk it over," said McCue. Then he laughed a trifle foolishly, tossed back the plate into the dish-box, and lumbered to the door.

"Weather's on the change," he observed. "Say, Barrett, this stacks up like a norther."

By noon the wind shifted and the rain became a whipping sleet.

"We're sure in fer it," declared Sweetie. "Did you see the ponies?"

"No."

"They'd oughter be at the corral without no drivin' now. Come on to the stack."

They threw down the fodder in the lee of the stout log fence of the corral. Every now and then McCue would straighten up, wipe the hail from his face, and stare into the swelling storm.

"Where's that fool bunch?" he grumbled.

"Oh, the horses'll come in," said Barrett. "They know what's good for 'em."

"If they kin see the way, they'll come in. This here'll turn a blizzard d'reckly," went on McCue in an injured tone, "and them critters—I'll chase along the creek and round 'em up. You keep on a-pitchin'."

At the end of his lively task Barrett realized for the first time the rigor of the cold. The sleet had whitened into snow, which the wind whirled horizontally, in vast, stinging, blinding clouds, apparently destined never to reach the ground.

Barrett piled up the firewood and sat down to wait for his companion. The titanic fury of the norther began to numb his wits; he felt like an unthinking beast in a hole. He stooped beyond the door and emptied his revolver, and reloaded for another volley, hoping that the shots might give a signal. After an hour McCue staggered in.

There was a cruel bruise on his temple, as if he had fallen from the bluff, and he was dazed with the brain-stealing grip of frost. He looked puzzled and gently grateful when Barrett pulled off his stiff coat.

"Pretty cold," he sighed, finding speech slowly. "Guess I'll—go—sleep."

"There'll be hot stew in a minute," said Barrett.

McCue blinked doubtfully.

"Can't sleep," he continued, "till I see that there gal," and, to Barrett's amazement, he threw open the door.

"The gal's out yonder where I was," he cried. "I just been talkin' with her."

"What girl?"

"Rosabella."

Barrett glanced up sharply. McCue stood stalwart and erect, shoving his powerful arms into the sleeves of his overcoat. His chin was set and his eyes flaming, but the force of his bearing lay in a resolute calmness which made Barrett wince.

"Why, Mac, there isn't a woman within ten miles," said Barrett. "Stop your kidding. This isn't good weather for—— Mac, for Heaven's sake, think!"

"I'm through thinkin'. Rosabella's ready to speak out. I'm goin' down the creek to see her again."

Barrett dodged forward and tried to throw him. McCue crunched Barrett in his elbow and flung him to the floor. Barrett clutched the giant's knee; Sweetie shook loose and picked up Barrett's loaded pistol from the bunk. There was no ferocity, no harmful intent, in the struggle. Sweetie was merely defending himself.

"Come with me if you wants," he said placidly. "Only come peaceable. We'll make a' excursion, me and you."

The younger man was strong and undaunted; he wrenched with all his muscle at the madman's wrist. McCue wound his big fingers in Barrett's collar and dragged him into the blizzard, breasting the wind with the sullen power of a mighty machine.

III.

At the cosey ranch-house of the Cross-F Miss Rose killed the winter days agreeably enough in her brother's company. The problem of her feeling towards Barrett was shelved. It was obviously a problem of no present importance.

On a certain misty morning in January she marched to the stable and flung a saddle on her favorite horse. For seventy-two hours of drizzling rain they had both been weather-bound.

"Where to, Rose?" called Carson.

"Wherever Hot Cakes will carry me," said the girl.

"He'd jump Sundance Butte if you'd let him. Look out for yourself. The weather isn't much."

Rose laughed at the powerful spring of the pony, at the swish of the fog on her face, at the eager pull of the bridle-reins. Hot Cakes steadied into a mile-devouring gallop, the yellow mist began to roll away before the wind, and the air took on a sting that nipped her cheeks pleasantly. "You're slow for me, Hot Cakes," she cried, waving her quirt. "This is no New Yorker you're carrying."

The first scurry of snow found Rose beyond Medicine Bottom on the Belle Fourche. Of what could she have been thinking? Hot Cakes swung his back against the moaning wind and puffed hard into the sage-brush. A sober glance at the thick north told Miss Carson that there was no time to lose. The river must guide her to the ranch-house and, at the worst, Hot Cakes was fairly sure unguided to find his friends.

But it is difficult to follow the Belle Fourche in a snowstorm. Involuntarily the horse veered in the direction of the wind. The river was out of sight in the whirling clouds.

"We won't be fools now, Hot Cakes," said Rose. "Don't lose your head, old boy."

The pony trudged forward with such a cock-sure confidence that Rose took comfort from the resolute tip of his ears. Hot Cakes knew where he was going if ever horse did. After all, the first creek would probably lead to refuge of some kind. Rose reflected grimly how Jack would swear at her stupidity, and how Barrett would laugh at her chagrin. When Hot Cakes slipped into a cut towards a water-course these pictures became vivid. Here unmistakably was Medicine Creek.

To the right, against the freezing blasts, lay the river and the ranch. But Hot Cakes twitched persistently the other way. "Trust a good horse" is a cattleman's maxim. To the left there was the protection of high clay banks and less block of snow. Rose tried to reason. Her brain seemed drowsy. She dropped from the saddle, wound an arm in the stirrup leather, and plodded a-foot up the creek beside her pony.

What was that beyond the dim turn of the shrouded bluff? A pair of ghostly cottonwood stumps, maybe, or gateposts: if the latter, a granger's shack might be close at hand, or——

"Howdy, Rosabella," saluted the larger ghost gravely, as if expecting her.

"Oh, how do you do?" panted Miss Carson. Was her brain, then, finally asleep and dreaming?

The other spectral figure lurched forward.

"Rose!" it exclaimed with the voice of Barrett.

Miss Carson laughed weakly. Of course, she was at the horse-camp. These people were real, and one of them she was very glad to see.

"Hot Cakes and I are rather tired," she said. "We lost our way, and if you'll give me a lift——"

Barrett stretched out his arms. But the big stranger waved Barrett back with something he held. Rose looked twice; it was a long revolver.

"Nothin's goin' to happen you, Rosabella," said this towering creature. "But we got to kinder round-up and settle yer brand. It'll take no more'n a half minute fer you to speak."

"McCue, for God's sake!" expostulated Barrett. "Can't you see she's worn out—perhaps dying? McCue, we must save her!"

"It'll take no more'n a half minute," repeated Sweetie earnestly, covering Barrett with the muzzle of the forty-five, "and the longer you chew, the colder she gets."

"But I don't think that I understand," stammered the girl to Barrett.

"Oh, this is McCue. He's sick in the head. He talks queer."

"If you mean I'm sick o' talkin', you're c'rreck," snarled McCue, with dangerous and growing wrath. "Rosabella, this here's Ned Barrett, a fine boy, a' elegant fine boy. He loves you. I loves you—me, McCue, a good man." He took off his hat solemnly. "It's up to you, lady. Throw both of us down if you wants to, but do business P. D. Q."

"Let's push for camp first," suggested Barrett warily, "and think it over."

"Yes, let me wait, Mr. Mac," gasped Rose.

"Wait nothin'," roared Sweetie. "Yes er no. We'll stand fer either one. We're men."

Miss Carson stared at him in desperation. She felt the curious contagion of insanity. This passionate brute of the storm, with his square, masterful face, seemed to take her to a passionate, stormy world of his own making, inhabited solely by her and Ned Barrett and himself; the trio stood in a white, wind-swept universe, with only the

essential emotions for company. To temporize in this forcible monster's world was as incongruous as to coquette with a volcano. For the first time she seemed to read her heart, clear, plain, and simple, and there was no problem there at all.

Rose turned to Barrett and extended her hands to him, naturally and impulsively.

"Yes, Ned!" she said. It never occurred to her to do or say anything else.

"That'll hold, I reckon," announced the giant, and jammed on his sombrero. "Now we kin pull freight. But, hold on!" He paused, deliberating. "Seems like you'd have to kiss him up some, Rosabella, to bind this here compact."

Rose drew back. The apprehensive, half-insulted appeal in her look strained Barrett's discretion to the snapping-point.

"You crazy coward," he cried, "how dare you——"

"I shoot fer less'n coward."

"Shoot, then."

Barrett leaped straight for the pistol. A shell cracked and his shoulder burned. He locked himself to McCue's waist. They fell: Sweetie rained blows with a sledge-hammer fist, all the stars of creation sang in Barrett's skull, but he held on, reaching for a throat grip, and over the tumult he began to hear Rose's voice: "Hands up, McCue! Hands up!" Then he was released. He jumped to his feet.

McCue knelt in the snow with his arms uplifted. Rose stood over him, pointing the revolver.

"You surely has the drop, Ma'am," mumbled Sweetie. "What fer—what fer—I don't remember"—and he winked sadly, like a whimpering boy.

"Oh Ned," Rose said, resigning the pistol to Barrett,— "oh Ned, would you rather be shot than kiss the girl who—who chose you?"

She caught her breath and leaned, sobbing, against Hot Cake's flank. Barrett raised her to the saddle. McCue tottered up; the shock of the encounter had plunged him in a trance; he was lost and pitiful and must be led by the hand, child-fashion, while they ploughed to the horse-camp. Once inside the door he fainted on his blankets and lay unconscious.

"Rose, I shall make you answer now," said Barrett as they watched the wood-fire kindle. "Poor old Mac taught me that. You saved my unworthy life, and it belongs to you, such as it is."

It was not alone the firelight which glowed on Miss Carson's face.

"I have answered. I want to take back nothing," she said softly, "although a proposal with a temporary lunatic and a forty-five revolver is not usual, even in the Bad Lands."

IV.

THE storm died before sunset, and the moon came up full and clear. Barrett waded out and found the ponies, snorting defiance at the drifts. When he returned Rose was making coffee, and McCue, over the edge of his blankets, was glaring at her, panic-stricken.

"Who's that-a-one? When did she blow in?" he whispered to Barrett. His eyes were dull once more and he was entirely rational.

"Why, that's Rosabella," said Barrett.

"Rosabella, hey? Never heard such a fancy name as those. Sounds like a sleepin'-car. Say, I couldn't find them horses and I took a fall. How'd you skin yer shoulder? Did you pack me into camp, pardner? I disremember." Sweetie rubbed his head and regarded Miss Carson with much suspicion.

"I'm going to ride with that lady to the ranch," Barrett said. "We can reach it by midnight easily. But how about leaving you alone? You won't go down the creek making love a second time, will you?"

"Look-a-here, I guess you're loony," retorted McCue. "Some folks go queer for a while in a norther. I'm all right, Barrett. Go on with Rosa—what's that fool name again?"

Barrett's attempted explanation convinced McCue that his companion's mind was unhinged. The conviction was strengthened in the spring, when Sweetie received an invitation to Miss Carson's wedding. It was addressed to "Mr. McCupid."

"Well, I'm damned!" he observed. "Mc-Cue-pid! And what have I got to do with weddin's nohow?"



SONG FOR A SUMMER TWILIGHT

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

WHEN the primrose of eve parts the green of its husk,
 And the great primrose moon flowers above in the sky,
 I long (how I long!) for her face in the dusk,
 And her voice to my voice making loving reply.

Ah, I know she will come by the bird on the bough,
 And I know she will come by the clear cricket chirr;
 Ah, I know she will come,—she is nearing me now!—
 By the breath of the night blent of attar and myrrh!

A moment—and then will be paradise won;
 Hark the beat on the grass of her hastening feet!
 As a lily that leans towards its lover, the sun,
 Are her lips lifted up—O my sweet! O my sweet!

“FOR A’ THAT”

By Clinton Dangerfield



“SIRE,” whispered an agitated attendant, quite unmoved by the beauty of the landscape lying so placidly in the evening sunshine, “Sire, your Majesty terrifies me by this familiarity with an unknown American, even though you think he does not guess your rank. For a week your Majesty has met him here on this shore and compelled me to leave you—yet who knows but he may be an anarchist?—a murderer? His country is most impossible.”

“And who knows,” interrupted the King angrily, “but that the moon may be made of green cheese? or the cup of coffee I had this morning of poison? One is as much worth speculating on as the other. Kindly withdraw, my Lord, he is coming. Console yourself by the knowledge that this is the last time I meet him, for to-morrow I go back to”—he hesitated a second and then added—“to the usual damned routine!”

The courtier, he was a duke with an income worthy of his rank, looked sincerely shocked, but he went away.

“It is certainly a touch of madness in him,” he muttered to himself, “this desire to meet a commoner on the man’s own level! We all know insanity has been in his family.”

Meantime Hollingsworth, frank-eyed and smiling, had joined the King.

“Guten tag, mein Freund,” said the American gayly as he came up. “Hear how my accent improves, in spite of the complications of your tangled tongue. But you are solemn this evening. You should have gotten up at dawn, as I did, and have had a dip with me in the ocean. Everything looked as fresh as new-mown hay.”

His companion looked at him curiously.

“How have you managed to keep all that enthusiasm? Is life so easy on a—what do you call it?—ranch?”

The American stared. “Well, you don’t know much of life!” he said, laughing. “Is life easy on a ranch? I reckon not! But what’s the use of going over past troubles now? You see, I actually made something over expenses last year, so here I am, taking the first vacation I ever had. Great country this.” Then, irrelevantly, he added: “Odd we two should have struck up a friendship, isn’t it? I suppose it’s because we are opposites. You have a kind of melancholy about you

that I seem to like, I don't know why!" He threw himself on the sand and the other sat down beside him, while in the distance the courtier watched them surreptitiously by the aid of a powerful glass. The latter was not particularly attached to his royal master, but the change of dynasty which must occur at the present King's death was likely to prove highly prejudicial to his individual interests, therefore he scanned the American's face keenly for possible indications of murderous intents.

Hollingsworth was lazily throwing pebbles into the surf, trying to make them skim the feathery line, with the same suggestion of resolute and nervous force which shone through all he did.

"Do you know," said his friend slowly, "that this is our last meeting? To-morrow I must go home."

"I wish you could have another week here, but I suppose your business is imperative?"

"I am told so," said the other dryly.

"I don't want to be inquisitive," said the American hesitatingly, "but I noticed yesterday, and again to-day, that you were looking pretty serious. No offence, but is business all right with you?"

"It is not!" said his companion gloomily, visions of an argumentative Premier and a clamorous people rising before him. "It never is! As soon as I get one snarl straightened out there is another ready."

"Just so!" said Hollingsworth cheerfully, but with kindly sympathy in his voice. "Know how it is exactly. Been there myself, many a time! On my place in Texas I found that each fellow, from the foreman to Hung Chang, the cook, had his pet particular grievance ready at all hours—and the changes in the market were the devil."

"I suppose so," admitted his friend a little absently, then suddenly becoming aware of a warm, strong hand laid on his shoulder.

"See here, old fellow," said Hollingsworth, plunging in, "I told you I made a little haul before I left home—wish for your sake it was bigger. Now, you mustn't get too blue—all of us get it in the neck occasionally. And so—that is—I mean—oh, hang it! If you want a check for a couple of hundred, say the word and it's yours."

His friend, who had finally lain at ease on the sand, now sat up so suddenly and with such a flush on his cheek that the Texan feared he had given mortal offence.

Perplexity succeeded dismay with the American when he saw how piercingly the other was gazing at him.

"You know all," said his companion accusingly, "and you think that by this you will——"

"Stop!" said the American imperatively. "If you've done anything wrong, I don't want to hear it. What you use the money for is no affair of mine. I like you, and that's enough for me. I sha'n't miss the check: it only means skipping Monte Carlo, and I reckon I've no busi-

ness there, anyway. As to the check, I—er—that is—I made it out for you this morning."

He drew the slip of paper awkwardly from his bill-book and quickly slipped it into the other's pocket.

"You mean," said his new-found friend a little hoarsely, "that you give me this expecting no return? You have really done it because you liked me, and not because you hoped for an exchange?"

The American looked in sheer astonishment into the other's eyes. He saw tears there, and they embarrassed him, but he said frankly:

"Look here, Ehrenfeld,"—the name given by his companion was that of one of his numerous estates,—"you must be in a mighty queer profession and meeting mighty crooked men if you've such a poor estimate of human nature that you think a fellow can't be civil without fishing for his neighbor's goods. You drop that idea, and get away from the folks who gave it to you."

"If I cannot get away from them," said his friend slowly, "I can at least remember always that once in my life a service, a disinterested service, was rendered me."

"What you need is a good shaking up," said the Texan decidedly. "Your liver's out of order—that's what's the matter with Han—with you, I mean. See that apple on that solitary tree over yonder? Come along, and we'll race for it. Here, don't sprawl your elbows out that way—hold them so! Now, ready! Off!"

His boyishness was irresistible. They ran frantically towards the prize, a gnarled and wormy specimen on a dilapidated tree. The King desired to win it as he had never desired the rich principalities won for him by his generals. Out of sheer good-nature the Texan let him gain it, amused to see the triumph shining in the winner's face as he divided the not very desirable fruit, while the Duke found himself so nearly on the verge of apoplexy that his shaking hand could scarcely support the field-glass. To the latter's relief his master sat down, panting, the American leaning idly against the apple-tree, carving a piece of the divided apple-core fantastically with his knife.

Presently, with recovered breath, the winner addressed him a little wistfully:

"Hollingsworth, do you merely assume this light-heartedness? Is it really true that you have nothing weighing on you?"

The Texan threw away the core with an impatient gesture; a shadow crossed his face. Even his clear brown eyes darkened as with a cloud.

"God knows," he muttered. "I never knew real trouble till I came here. But now——"

"Tell me." The exquisitely sympathetic inflections of the King's trained voice were not to be resisted. The Texan looked away a little shamefacedly.

"Don't laugh at me," he said hesitatingly, "but I—the truth is—I love a girl here and I can't get her. At least, I haven't been able so far," he added more cheerfully.

The King barely suppressed a smile. So long had the manifold cares of state weighed on him, that far, far in the background lingered the bygone fancies once drawing him towards true love—such love as his stifled life had never known. But the smile died unseen.

"Who is she, Hollingsworth?"

"Daughter of an old fellow who's worth a shocking lot of money, came in for a windfall—that is, er hat eine Erbschaft gemacht. Du verstehst?"

"Gewiss!" smiled his friend, quite untroubled by the familiar "thou."

"And he wants to buy a title with it. I don't think he'd care how poor the title is, just so it's 'von' something. Evidently, then, it would be a comedown to take a commoner for his son-in-law." He spoke lightly, but his eyes were full of passionate desire. "But, hang it! what's the use of talking about it? She won't leave him without his blessing, though I could dispense with it very comfortably."

"His name," suggested the other, "and he lives in——"

Hollingsworth answered indifferently. His friend might know the name if he liked. They were strangers and would never meet again.

They parted, to the intense relief of the watching courtier. The Texan stared regretfully after his whilom companion.

"Downright good company," he said half aloud. "Plagued pity he's hard up. Wish I had doubled that check, however it might have strapped me."

He turned to look at the vast waters, but found no consolation there.

"Lonely you came to the shore," they sang hoarsely, "and lonely you shall go away."

Johann Schmitt sat smoking his pipe over a dying fire. He was thinking gloomily that all his money had brought him no nearer his idea of paradise. Ah, to be addressed as "Baron," "the noble Herr Baron," to have panels on his coach decorated with his coat of arms, to see the people bowing before one, and to hear them exclaim, as one rolled away, "Welche pracht!" But the beautiful is ever the unattainable! If only——

Then a summons to the capital, thirty miles away, interrupted his dreams, and frightened him until his usual florid hue was almost purple. As he sped on in the train he leaned forward and grasped the officer's arm.

"Heiliger Herr," he stuttered, "am I in danger?"

A shrug, but no words, answered him.

When he stood before the King his limbs were weakening under him, and in his extremely commonplace fatness there was no hint of the beauty possessed by his daughter. That did not concern his royal master, who, besides, knew well enough what blossoms sometimes flourish on a gnarled stock.

"Herr Schmitt," he said abruptly, "I hear you are ambitious. You would acquire a title?"

Johann fell on his knees.

"Gracious Majesty," he faltered, "I meant no harm."

"Neither do I," said the King. "I am going to create you Baron *Lebenwohl*. To be sure, your estates will be of the barest, but you are rich enough to improve on them. You will be of particular importance, as you shall be the first of the name. Get up."

Johann staggered up, dazed with his good fortune. Then he straightened himself and let the news flow through his veins like wine. The shiver went out of his muscles, a suppressed arrogance flushed his red face.

"Sire," he said, "you overwhelm me with your beneficence! And if the treasury wishes a loan—without interest——"

"No loan," said the King abruptly. "I shall bestow this title on you so that your daughter may be worthy to marry Herr Hollingsworth, of Texas, who recently asked her hand. See that the nuptials are consummated at once."

"Gracious Majesty," he groaned, "what avails it to be a Baron if I must have a vulgar plebeian son-in-law? Unless," he added hopefully, "your condescension will ennoble him too!"

The King looked down on him, then glanced aside at the hawkfaced Duke, who stood near with biting scorn in his face for this new member of the aristocracy. Neither in his new creation nor in the self-satisfied courtier of years standing did the King find a hint of what he sought. Then with inward vision he saw again the hard, white sands, and pacing them the upright, clean-cut Texan, with his frank, mellow voice and unselfish, fearless eyes.

"No," he said quietly, "I cannot—ennoble him."

The peer-to-be withdrew, musing on his good and ill luck.

The King sat silently by the table, playing with a crumpled piece of paper on which ran a bold signature. Half bitter, half sad, were the lines around his mouth. Perhaps he wrestled with views of life which had never troubled him before.

"Sire," the Duke ventured smoothly, "the secret Ambassador from the Emperor, bearing messages of undying friendship for your Majesty, waits without."

The lines on the King's mouth trembled into a sardonic smile. He crushed the paper into his bosom and said wearily,—

"Let him come in."

THE OFFENDING EYE

By Ella Middleton Tybout

Author of "Ananias of Poketown," "An Unwilling Delilah," "The Ass that Vanquished Balaam," etc.



BROTHER NOAH HYATT, one of the chief pillars of the church, a member of the Sessions, a leader of class-meeting, and especially gifted in exhortation, had a certain peculiarity which was a matter of comment in Poketown. This was his apparent ability to fix one eye sternly upon an objective point while the other rolled independently about, seeking for new worlds to conquer. The stationary orb was light blue, while its roving companion was brown.

Brother Jacob Sutton was pondering upon this eccentricity of nature as the two men walked home from class-meeting one Friday night, and at last summoned courage to give utterance to his thoughts.

"Hit jes' entah meh mine, Brothah Hyatt," he remarked casually, "tuh wondah huccum yo' haid tuh suppoht a blue eye on de lef' an' a brown eye on de right. Hit done make yo' 'peah pow'ful exting'ished, tuh be sho'. Does yo' know huccum de Lawd tuh favah yo' dat-a-way?"

The brown eye of Brother Hyatt flashed angrily, in direct opposition to the pleasant smile of the blue member of the firm.

"Reckon He done hit fuh de same reason He tuck an' favah yo' wid one straight laig an' one bow laig," he returned indifferently, and Brother Sutton felt impelled to change the subject.

"De case o' James Pollahd am gwine tuh be laid befo' de chu'ch nex' class night," he remarked hastily; "yo' 'membahs dat he done tuck a paiah o' pants f'om de Jew sto' on Main Street, an' dey come an' 'rested him 'case dey seen him gwine tuh chu'ch in 'em."

"Dem plaid pants done lay him low fo' sho'," said Brother Hyatt reflectively.

"'Peahs like, bein' ez he done wuck out he time in jail, de sin am spashiated 'nuff," hinted Brother Sutton, who was inclined to be lenient.

"Ef plaid pants am de undoin' o' James Pollahd," said Brother Hyatt unctuously, "den he got tuh stick tuh plain goods. Sich am de konsekinse o' vanity."

"Po' James! 'Peahs like I kin see him now, standin' up in dem pants an' givin' in he sperience fuh de old yeah when dey tuck an' 'rested him," said Brother Sutton, indulging in momentary retrospection.

"De chu'ch," said Brother Hyatt severely as he paused at his own gate, "am obligated tuh sterminate sich acks. Dem whut 'dulg'es in cuss wo'ds had ought tuh slit dey tongues; dem whut takes de goods o' othahs had ought tuh chop dey han's offen dey body."

"Sofly, Brothah, sofly," ejaculated Mr. Sutton.

"Dem am de wo'ds o' de Book," affirmed Brother Hyatt, focussing his wandering eye upon the hands of his companion, which involuntarily sought the privacy of his pockets. "Kin yo' ahgify 'g'inst dat, Brothah Sutton?"

Brother Sutton could not. He therefore took his leave, and Mr. Hyatt entered his house and closed the door. Within those four walls he was monarch of all he surveyed, and he intended to remain so.

"Dem ez has 'scaped de clutches of a female woman, by de grace o' Gawd," he was wont to assert, "had bettah keep deyse'fs tuh deyse'fs, 'caze dey ain' no knowin' whut gwine tuh happen ef yo' gits tuh passin' de time o' day too frequent."

Almost simultaneously with closing the door he removed his left eye and placed it carefully in his waistcoat pocket, over the edge of which it smiled bravely on, a small blue island on a sea of white. The existence of this glass eye was the skeleton in the closet of Brother Hyatt, and he guarded the secret jealously. When bargaining for its purchase it had been suggested to him that perhaps brown would be a better choice than blue, owing to the prevailing custom of having such appendages to match when possible, but he had repudiated the suggestion with scorn.

"Whut yo' reckon I wants tuh git a brown eye fo'?" he demanded argumentatively. "Ain' I jes' done wo' one clean out? I's gwine tuh git a blue eye, dat's whut I's gwine tuh do."

And blue it was.

Going to his back door, Brother Hyatt opened it and surveyed the landscape. The quiet of an August night reigned supreme, and overhead the moon shone with enticing brilliancy. Beyond two adjoining fields an irregular dark outline was plainly visible. It was the water-melon patch of a neighboring truck farm.

Brother Jacob Sutton, after leaving his companion, paused at his own residence to procure an empty grain-sack. When one hunts one naturally carries a gamebag. Brother Sutton was bent on a still-hunt, and wished to be properly equipped.

"De speckled pullet ovah tuh de fahm mus' be 'bout at de fryin' aige now," he reflected as he climbed the fence.

And the speckled pullet, with several companions, soon fluttered uneasily in the seclusion of the grain-bag.

"Mought ez well come home thu de watahmillion patch," he reflected, his errand accomplished to his satisfaction.

The dew lay thick upon the vines, glistening brightly in the light of the moon, and scattered closely about the field were the melons themselves, large and luscious, and most tempting to the palate.

"Ovah in de cohnah by de crick," ruminated Mr. Sutton, "de sun shine wahmes' an' de fruit tas'e sweetes'."

Accordingly he repaired to the corner by the creek, bent upon refreshment of the inner man, but someone was before him. Brother Sutton hesitated an instant, then approached boldly.

"James Pollahd," he exclaimed sternly, "whut yo' doin' hyah?"

James Pollard, he of the plaid trousers, turned apprehensively around, then gave vent to a relieved chuckle.

"Clah tuh goodness," he remarked, "I done thunk hit whuh ole man Noahy Hyatt."

"James," said Brother Sutton solemnly, "yo' done lef' de jail yis-tidday; is yo' gwine tuh 'zume evil ackshuns 'mej'ate?"

The unhappy James entered into a rambling explanation of his reasons for the nocturnal expedition, but the attention of his companion wandered perceptibly as his eyes became fixed upon the partly consumed fruit at his feet.

"James," he interrupted suddenly, "am she ripe?"

Over the brow of the hill now appeared a third figure, walking slowly and stooping now and then to tap a melon inquiringly with thumb and finger.

"Pow'ful quare," he muttered; "I done make meh mahk on de top so's dey wouldn' be no trubble 'bout it. I done mahked it wid a cross an' 'lowed I'd come tuh-night an' git it."

Brother Hyatt paused in his search and listened intently. He heard a murmur of voices, which gradually grew more distinct. Hastily his hand sought his waistcoat pocket and fumbled there unavailingly: his eye was gone.

A famous general has said that the best mode of defence is by attack, and it is apparently true that great minds run in the same channels, for Brother Noah Hyatt promptly advanced to meet the enemy, with one hand held over the empty eyesocket and the other raised in stern denunciation.

"Brothah Sutton," he exclaimed, "whut yo' aftah, Brothah Sutton? Whuh yo' 'ligion, Brothah Sutton, whuh yo' 'ligion?"

Mr. Sutton pointed towards his companion, guiltily trembling at his side, clad in the identical plaid trousers which had occasioned his downfall, purchased and presented by a sympathizing friend upon his release from prison.

"I come hyah, Brothah Hyatt," he responded loftily, "tuh snatch

de brand f'om de burnin'. I done come tuh wras'le wid dis Son o' Sin an' Wickedness, an' tuh keep he feet f'om strayin' whuh dey done strayed befo'."

"Hope tuh die," stammered the wretched James, visions of the county jail rising vividly before his mind's eye,—“hope tuh die, Brothah Hyatt, I ain' done nawthin'. He tuck an' eat ez much ez me."

"James," said Brother Sutton in tones of patient reproach, "I zorts yo' not tuh add lyin' tuh yo' crap o' sins. Yo's got 'nuff tuh spashiate an' tuh sterminate 'thout dat, James."

"Ax him whut he got in he baig," muttered James, his knees knocking together as he encountered the brown eye of Brother Hyatt fixed upon him,—“ax him whut he got in he baig."

Brother Sutton shifted the bag to the other shoulder, and its occupants stirred uneasily as he did so.

"I got mus'rats in meh baig," returned Mr. Sutton promptly. "I done been down tuh de crick aftah mus'rats."

Mr. Hyatt passed to the rear and squeezed the bag between his hands; a muffled squawk resulted from the pressure.

"'Peahs like de lanwidge o' mus'rats done been changed sence yistidday," he remarked dryly as he replaced his hand before his eye and resumed his former location.

"Whut yo' doin' hyah yo'se'f, Brothah Hyatt?" inquired Mr. Sutton, rallying sufficiently to return the attack. "Kin yo' splain yo' own ackshuns?"

Brother Hyatt saw his way of escape and took immediate advantage of it.

"Brothah Sutton," he replied, "I done come hyah 'caze ole Satan he beckon me; dat's huccum me tuh be hyah. He done drug me ovah de fence an' tuck an' p'inted out de ripes' million in de patch. I sets meh eye on hit, Brothah Sutton, I sets meh eye on hit, an' I wants hit, y-a-a-s, I wants hit pow'ful bad. I couldn' git meh eye f'om offen hit nohow; de 'zire growed an' swelled in meh buzzom twell I feel fit tuh bus'. Whut yo' think I done, Brothah Sutton, whut yo' think I done?"

"Reckon yo' tuck an' cut de million," said Brother Sutton, speaking as from experience.

"No, sah," returned Brother Hyatt piously, "I didn' do dat nohow. I 'membahs de wo'ds o' de Book, 'if yo' eye offen' yo', pluck hit out an' cas' hit f'om yo', an' dat's whut I done, Brothah Sutton, dat's whut I done."

He dramatically removed his hand at the concluding word, and the eyelid collapsed into the cavernous socket presented for inspection. The two men gasped with astonishment, and Brother Hyatt resumed:

"She come out pow'ful hahd," he said pathetically; "dem roots

wuh sho'ly in good an' tight, but I kep' a-pullin',—y-a-a-s, I kep' a-pullin', 'caze I ain' gwine tuh suppoht no onruly membahs tuh my body. No, sah! I's gwine tuh cas' 'em f'om me. An' aftah I done fling dat sinful blue eye intuh de crick de Lawd come down in a ch'iot o' fiah an' stanchd de bleedin' an' tuck away de huht. He sez tuh me, sez He, 'Well done, Noahy Hyatt!' sez He."

"I nevah hyah no sperience de ekil o' dat," said Mr. Sutton in awestruck tones.

"Does yo' still hone fuh de million, Brothah Hyatt?" inquired James Pollard curiously.

"James," said Brother Hyatt severely, "I tells yo' mighty solemn dat ef yo' reaches out yo' han' tuh tech dem millions (whut don' b'long tuh yo'), yo's gwine tuh see a' Eye lookin' at yo'. Dat Eye am wotchin' yo' cyahful, an' yo' kaint hide f'om hit nohow. Has yo' disremembah 'bout de All-Pervadin' Eye, Brothah Sutton? Huccum you do dat? Huccum yo', Brothah Sutton? Hit done been spyin' aftah yo' dis night. De Session am gwine tuh hyah 'bout dem mus'rats, sho's yo' bawn. Dey's somebody sides James Pollahd fo' de chu'ch tuh deal wid, Brothah Sutton."

With which concluding remark Mr. Hyatt turned and walked majestically away, complete master of the situation.

"James," said Mr. Sutton reproachfully when they were alone, "yo' didn' have no call tuh 'trac' 'tention tuh de baig, nohow."

"Has yo' got mus'rats in dat baig, sho' 'nuff?" asked James, who was an inquiring youth.

"I leaves yo' hyah, James, tuh yo' own 'fleckshuns; aftah whut yo' done 'pinionated 'bout dis baig, I reckon I don' wan' yo' s'ciety home nohow."

So saying, Brother Sutton walked sorrowfully off. His heart was heavy within him, owing to the unfortunate contretemps, and his soul was awed with the Spartan resistance of Brother Hyatt to the prompting of the devil. Gradually, however, he succumbed to the witchery of his surroundings and forgot everything but the fact that it was pleasant to be alive and to wander at will in a watermelon patch alone in the moonlight.

"Reckon I mought ez well tote one home tuh 'Cindy," he reflected, and looked about him preparatory to a careful selection. The dew shone white and sparkling upon the dark-green rind of his choice; it was necessary to push aside some leaves to find the stem, and Brother Sutton did so. With a loud yell of terror he jumped up and started to run, but caught his foot in the vine and fell heavily forward.

"De Eye!" he gasped, "de Eye!"

And, indeed, beneath the sheltering leaves a stern blue eye lay upon the ground and gazed up at him in silent accusation.

The countenance of Mr. Sutton was covered with an ashen bloom of fright, and large drops of perspiration stood out upon his brow as he stared fixedly at it, quite motionless from its irresistible magnetism. He felt it incumbent upon him to follow the example of Brother Hyatt, yet shrank weakly from the pruning process.

"Lawd," he gasped, moistening his trembling lips, "I knows whut yo' spec's me tuh take an' do. Meh eyes done res' 'pon de million, but, O Lawd, 'tain't one eye no mo' den t'othah. How I gwine tuh git 'long ef dey's bofe cas' out? I done seen hit lookin' up at me; I done seen dat Watchful Eye, Lawd, dat yo' keeps tuh sick on wicked pussons. Y-a-a-s, oh, y-a-a-s. I done seen it plain."

Here his breath failed for an instant, and the chickens in the bag upon his back stirred slightly.

"I's gwine tuh give dem chickins back, good Lawd," continued the uncertain voice; "I don' 'peah tuh cyah 'bout 'em nohow."

He sat cautiously upright and fumbled at the neck of the bag, finally shaking his prisoners out one by one.

"Git home," he cried, heading off first one and then another, as they rushed madly about after the manner of all chickens; "shoo! git outen meh sight. Shoo!"

The speckled pullet, spreading her wings until they touched the ground, started for home on the double-quick, followed by her companions, all squawking loudly. And Brother Sutton, with a hasty but apprehensive glance behind him, did likewise.

Now James Pollard, when left alone beside the creek, pondered thoughtfully upon the events of the evening without arriving at any definite conclusion; he was sadly puzzled.

"Ole man Noahy Hyatt nevah done pull out dat eye hisse'f nohow," he said aloud. "Yit, huccum dat hole in he haid?"

James scratched his own head thoughtfully as he finally started homeward. Heading wildly down the hill, and scuttling as though for their lives, came the speckled pullet and company.

"De mus'rats makin' fuh dey roos'," remarked James as he stood aside to let them pass, and then continued on his way, wondering greatly.

Observing what seemed to be an especially fine melon, he paused and bent over to examine it. What was that looking up at him from among the dark leaves? James's heart was in his mouth for a minute; then, gathering his courage together, he made the effort of his life, and putting forth a cautious finger touched the object, with fear and trembling at first, and then with curiosity and contempt.

James Pollard laughed long and loud as he disrespectfully thrust the accusing eye in the pocket of the plaid trousers, then quietly cut the

stem of the melon, placed it upon his shoulder, and proceeded on his way rejoicing until he reached the neighborhood of Brother Noah Hyatt, who sat in the shadow of an oak-tree refreshing himself with the produce of the field after the exhausting events of the night. He deeply regretted the loss of his eye, but felt that its absence would give him added prestige in class-meetings, therefore he bore it with fortitude.

"I's gwine tuh make 'em dance Juba nex' class-night," he reflected as he cut a large piece directly out the heart of the melon; "jes' let me git aftah 'em befo' de Session."

"I done pick up whut yo' drap a ways back," said the voice of James Pollard from behind the tree as he produced the glass eye. The lower jaw of Mr. Hyatt dropped with astonishment and he was speechless; James, however, was quite at his ease.

"I don' like dem stripy ones nohow," he remarked, turning over a bit of the rind with his foot, "dis yeah's de kine fuh me," and he deposited his burden upon the ground. Brother Hyatt pointed at the blue eye, which seemed to possess a far-away, unfamiliar look.

"Huccum," he gasped, "huccum——"

"Brothah Hyatt," said James, "I knows all 'bout yo', an' I's pow'ful glad I does. I ain' gwine to expose yo' humbuggery, 'case I wants tuh git back intuh de bes' s'ciety of Poketown. Ef yo' he'ps me, I he'ps yo'."

James paused and looked searchingly at his companion.

"Ef de chu'ch take an' hol' out huh ahms tuh me, Brothah Hyatt, an' fuhgit de plaid pants an' de jail; ef de best s'ciety in Poketown am zorted tuh open de do' tuh me, I reckon de Lawd mought wuck a merrycle an' a' eye mought up an' spring out same ez Jonah's gourd tuck an' growed in a night. 'Peahs like tuh me," added James enticingly, "I kin see hit sproutin' now."

"James," said Brother Hyatt, rising, "come home wid me an' go intuh meh back do'. De Lawd done favah yo' wid secon' sight, James."

There was a full attendance the next class-night, rumors of an unusual and interesting nature having excited the curiosity of Poketown to its highest point.

Brother Hyatt rose to address the meeting, and a stifled exclamation rose from Brother Jacob Sutton, who half rose to his feet, then sat down again.

"Brothah Sutton," said Brother Hyatt impressively, "I calls on yo' fo' yo' sperience las' Friday night, jes' aftah I done pull out meh lef' eye an' cas' hit f'om me 'caze hit res' too long on de goods o' othahs,—las' Friday night, Brothah Sutton, when yo' done went aftah mus'rats. Tell de chu'ch I's speechifyin' de truf 'bout dat eye."

And Brother Sutton, in faltering accents, testified that he had

met and conversed with Brother Hyatt when the eye was lacking. A thrill ran through the congregation as the story progressed with graphic details.

"James Pollahd," said Brother Hyatt, as Brother Sutton resumed his seat, "yo' done seen dat eye resto'ed tuh meh haid. Speak up now an' give in yo' sperience."

"Me an' Brothah Hyatt," said Mr. Pollard, "wuh settin' on he do'-step an' he wuh p'intin' out de way tuh heav'n tuh a po' sannah like me, when dey come a light, same ez de light when de meule stables on de towpath tuck fiah."

"Y-a-as! dey come a light. Praise Gawd!" interpolated Brother Hyatt.

"An' I done hyah a Voice outen de middle o' de light," resumed James; "hit say, 'Brothah Hyatt, de Lawd am pleased wid yo'. Hyah am yo' eye back ag'in, good ez new.'"

"An' den I done feel a ticklin' way back in de roots," said Brother Hyatt, taking up the thread of the discourse, "an' somethin' come a-bulgin' an' a-scrouchin' outen meh haid—glory! glory! hallelujah!—outen meh haid intuh de hole. Glory."

"De light done fade," said James solemnly, "an' I up an' sez tuh Brothah Hyatt, I sez, 'Yo' got yo' same ole eye back ag'in,' I sez."

"But 'twasn't de same ole eye," interrupted Brother Hyatt, "'case I done see diff'unt wid hit. Dis hyah eye done been in glory, an' de way hit see now am de right way fo' sho'. Hit done tell me plain whut am de duty o' de chu'ch to'ds hits wanderin' lambs. I axes yo', meh brothahs an' meh sistahs, tuh welcome back James Pollahd tuh yo' midst; I zorts yo' tuh open yo' do's wide tuh him."

Brother Hyatt reached for the hand of James Pollard and led him forward before the pulpit.

"Brothah Sutton," he said, fixing that trembling gentleman with his brown eyes, "I knows dat you's gwine tuh be 'mongst de fust tuh welcome Brothah Pollahd back tuh de ahms o' de chu'ch."

But Brother Sutton shook his head solemnly and rose, as though to protest.

"Brothah Sutton," admonished Brother Hyatt, "'tain't no time tuh speechify 'bout mus'rats; I sho'ly would hate tuh be obligated tuh tell all I knows 'bout 'em dis night. Step up, Brothah Sutton, an' welcome de lamb back tuh de fole; step up lively now, an' set de zample tuh de res' o' de Session."

And Brother Sutton stepped.



THE VAGABOND ROAD

BY DORA READ GOODALE

FROM one town to another
 The staid, brown highway runs,
 Laid out by the good fathers,
 Trodden by us and our sons :
 This way passes the schoolboy,
 The countryman with his load,
 The bridegroom and bride,—
 A busy procession
 Of young hearts and old,—
 And none turns aside
 Or pines for the Vagabond Road.

Oh, the Vagabond Road, have you seen it?
 How describe it in words?
 Green, capricious, enchanting,
 Haunted by sweet-singing birds,
 Still pursuing its pleasure
 By rock, pasture, and fall,
 Escaping, ascending,
 Deploying—and, where
 I know not, but surely
 Deliciously ending
 (So be it!) in nothing at all.

Dusty and safe is the highway,
 Thrice respectable too ;
 Here are clustered men's dwellings.
 Church and market in view.
 I, too, travel the turnpike
 And there fix my abode—
 Yet sometimes, perchance,
 I halt for a moment,
 When no one is by,
 And throw a long glance
 Far, far down the Vagabond Road.

ANOTHER MAN'S EXCUSES

By E. Spence de Pue



"THE drying up a single tear has more
Of honest fame, than shedding seas of gore."

—BYRON: "Don Juan."

WHEN the air is so absolutely still that a feather will drop straight to the floor, and the atmospheric pressure is so great that you can almost feel the weight of it upon your shoulders, and the loose electricity gets upon your nerves and makes them jangle, then old residents of San Francisco say that it is earthquake weather. It was the tail-end of just such a day that Charlie Winton walked into Doctor Lambert's office and told his story.

It wasn't a pretty tale he had to tell, and yet, taken as a whole, there was nothing out of the ordinary about it. It was simply to the effect that he had allowed his affections to wander in directions not permitted of a husband and the respectable head of a family. And his wife had found him out.

Doctor Lambert listened impatiently and was unreasonably angry, considering the fact that it was none of his affair. But as there was no escape he was compelled to wait till the story was finished. Winton concluded as follows:

"You see, those infernal letters in my pocket gave the whole thing away. She gave me no opportunity to reply, spurned me, said something stagey about a broken heart, and vanished. I might have straightened things out had she given me a chance."

"Yes?" asked Doctor Lambert wearily. "I am very sorry—for her."

The palpably discouraging tone rather took Winton aback for a moment, but, not being an exquisitely sensitive mortal, he commenced again:

"You can help me out of the difficulty, Doctor, if you will."

"I can't see that there is any difficulty, Mr. Winton," Doctor Lambert replied very placidly, and with a narrowing of the eyelids.

"But don't you see that she will leave me?" he replied, gulping a little from excessive self-pity.

"What of it? According to your own statement of the case, you have been having a good time, you have been happy. Why should you

worry at the thought of her going away? In forming your plans you have never considered her, unless it were to what extent it would be necessary to practise deception. Why, my dear sir, so far as I can see, it would be a benefit to you to be rid of her. Then there will be no one to disarrange your plans. It will abolish the necessity for subterfuge and save you any amount of worry. It leaves you an absolutely clear coast."

"Hang it, Lambert, don't be nasty about the matter! I always thought that you were one of my best friends. There are the proprieties to be observed, you know. And then, if she should go away, there would be talk. And, after all, a man's home is his home," he concluded weakly.

For that speech he gained Doctor Lambert's lasting contempt. Even the bad half hour he had promised to give the man faded from his mind; he doubted whether he had a weapon that would reach a tender spot. However, assuming his most winning expression he replied:

"Yes, old man, it will be rather hard on you, I am sure. A few nice women will probably cut you dead. There may even be a few lines in the papers, but it is not likely that it will make a big sensation by any means. But don't take the worst view of it. You can go away for awhile, and eventually it will all blow over."

"Don't! Not the papers—don't say that!" Winton broke in hoarsely, and began to walk rapidly back and forth. "Then you refuse to help me? Is that what I am to understand?"

"I am afraid there is nothing I can do. You see, it doesn't happen to be a case falling within the lines of my professional duty. I could hardly go to Mrs. Winton and ask her to make me the recipient of her confidences concerning her husband's misbehavior, and it is hardly likely that she will come to me for advice."

"But she has such great confidence in you, and——"

"And you would like to have me trade upon that for your benefit?" asked Doctor Lambert witheringly.

Evidently there was a weak spot in the armor, for Winton abruptly paused in his walk and stiffened.

"Oh, if that is the view you care to take of it—if—— But come, Lambert, I sha'n't say what I intended. You can help me if you will, and I know that you will. I am going to the club. I shall stay there until you ring me up if it's a week. Good-by." He was gone before Doctor Lambert could reply.

For half a minute Doctor Lambert sat quite still nursing his resentment against the departed one, then softly breathed,—

"Cur!"

But he could not dismiss the matter from his mind. He should

have been thinking of a dozen other very important things. But—it may have been the weather, he decided it must be that—he was very much on edge.

"Poor little girl!" he murmured; and again, "Poor little girl!"

Although he had said to Winton that he would be laying himself liable to rebuke should he broach so delicate a subject to the lady in question, he knew well enough that such was not the case. And had the man known his wife as well as he should, he would have known it too,—would have known that the hand which had guided the runting mouth of his baby to its mother's breast was the one upon which she would rely.

But what to do, that was the question. To insure her future happiness it would be necessary to deceive her, and the thought was revolting to him. She was not the sort of a woman to make excuses. Then, even when he had convinced her of her error, her heart would be very tender and she would grieve at the injustice she had done her husband. He could imagine how Winton would patronize her and forgive her for her suspicions.

Till the great, glowing, copper-colored disk of the sun had slowly settled into the notch between the Twin Peaks he thought of it, and heeded not the rising breeze of the evening, which blew his papers all about. He was angry that Winton had come to him with the story, and glad, after all, that he knew it. Suddenly he snapped his watch and unconsciously mused aloud:

"Six o'clock. I am going out there. The great point is that after her suspicions have been allayed she shall not guess that I was aware of them. The only way I can see out of it is to take the blame upon myself. Without doubt the letters are rather silly, but it is fortunate that they have not his name on them."

A half hour later Mrs. Winton met him at her door. If he had ever doubted the propriety of lying, her face convinced him that there were circumstances under which it was justifiable.

She was one of those diminutive women with great, soulful eyes, the kind of woman made to be loved and petted. Her fluffy blond hair and small, perfect form were so suggestive of the doll that one would naturally feel inclined to see whether the eyes would close mechanically, like any other well-regulated doll, should you place it in the proper position; only now the lids were red and swollen.

He must have shown in his greeting an unusual warmth, which he immediately regretted, for had he not frozen a little she would have been telling him the whole story, and he had a dread of scenes, because they played havoc with his sympathies.

"Has Mr. Winton come home yet?" he asked hastily.

"No, he sent word that he would be late," she answered.

"I am glad of that, Mrs. Winton. There was a favor I wanted to ask you, and I didn't— Now, how shall I get at it?" He hesitated with well-simulated embarrassment. "Well, I didn't exactly want your husband to see them, you know, if he has not already."

"See what?" she queried, a little curiously. They were seated facing each other.

"Do you happen to know whether Mr. Winton is wearing the same coat to-day that he had on yesterday?" he asked irrelevantly.

"He certainly is not. I am quite positive of that," she said. "Why do you ask?"

Doctor Lambert gave utterance to a moderate sigh of relief before answering.

"I will tell you. I have two mischievous young nieces who are always writing me silly notes, asking to be taken here and there and every place else. Well,"—he twisted in his chair, as though uncertain how to state the case,—“we were all down at the club last night, Mr. Winton and some others, playing hand-ball, I think it was, and, of course, we had our coats off. I spilled those letters, and thinking it over to-day, I am almost certain that I put them in Mr. Winton's pocket instead of my own. His was the only coat that looked like mine. Chances are he will read them, and the laugh will be on me; no one will believe— There, even you are laughing, Mrs. Winton."

Yes, she was laughing, immoderately, hysterically, with more than half a cry in it,—such a laugh as made Doctor Lambert's heart ache,—but he affected not to see that part of it and continued:

"If I remember aright, there were no envelopes on them, and— would it be too much trouble for you to see, Mrs. Winton?"

She had stopped laughing now and made one or two little, gaspy attempts to speak, then dabbed her handkerchief to her eyes. Doctor Lambert held his breath, anxiously waiting to see whether she would rise to the occasion, or whether she would be weak enough to tell him all the little things she had thought. Her pride won. The light of love and confidence swept over her face in a great wave, and she laughed again—a merry, care-free laugh.

"How unusual," she said. "Why, certainly, I will see this minute. If they are there, you shall have them, and Mr. Winton shall be deprived the opportunity of laughing at you about them, for I will never tell. But," she raised her finger and shook it at him archly, "are you quite certain they are from your mischievous nieces, Doctor Lambert?"

You may imagine the rest of this story; it isn't worth the telling. At another time there will appear the narrative of how Doctor Lambert made Charlie Winton pay dearly for his duplicity.

THE BLADE THAT WON

A TALE OF THE MIDI

BY

BURTON EGBERT STEVENSON

AUTHOR OF

"AT ODDS WITH THE REGENT," ETC.



PHILADELPHIA

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1903

**COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER, 1903



THE BLADE THAT WON

BY BURTON EGBERT STEVENSON

Author of "At Odds with the Regent," etc.

I.

I CHANCE UPON AN ADVENTURE

IT was at the corner of the Rue Gogard that I saw her first. You may, perhaps, recall the place if you know Montauban. A great barrack of a building, time-stained and neglected, blocks the way as one turns into it from the Rue Pluvois. Before the building is a high wall, pierced by a single gateway. The door is of oak, four inches thick and heavily barred with iron,—Vincennes has few stronger,—wherefrom it may be seen that he who erected the building was a man who had his enemies.

The gate held my eye as I turned the corner, and just as I reached it, it was flung open with a crash, and a girl rushed into the street. She stopped as she saw me standing there, and my hat was sweeping the pavement as I caught her eyes on mine.

"You seem a man of honor," she said, and pressed her hand against her breast as though to calm the beating of her heart.

"A thousand thanks, Mademoiselle," I answered, and I saw that even the stark emotion which possessed her could not destroy the beauty of her face. "Believe me, I shall be most happy to prove it."

"You have a sword?" she asked, still eying me with attention.

I threw back my cloak and touched the hilt.

"And know how to use it?"

"Try me, Mademoiselle," I said simply.

The color swept back into her face and her eyes narrowed with sudden resolution.

"Then follow me, Monsieur," she said, and turned back through the gateway.

I was at her heels as she ran across the little court and plunged into a dark doorway beyond. I paused an instant to draw my sword, dropping my cloak that it might not encumber me, and then clattered up the stair behind her. It was dark and narrow and of many turnings, so that she, who knew the place, had reached the top while I was stumbling along midway, cursing the darkness. But she awaited me, and as I reached her side held out her hand to me. My own closed over it in an instant and found it soft and warm and trembling. Here was an adventure after my own heart, and I had had so few adventures!

"Cautiously, Monsieur!" she whispered, and led the way along a narrow hall to the right. The darkness was absolute, the atmosphere hot and stifling. I began to wonder if I had walked into a trap, but that warm little hand in mine reassured me. Besides, who could know my errand from Marsan, and, not knowing it, who would set a trap for so small a bird as I? Then, suddenly, as we turned a corner, I heard the sound of angry voices and saw a light streaming redly through an open doorway. In a moment we had reached it, and I paused in astonishment as I saw what lay within.

There was a great fire blazing on the hearth, which threw into sharp relief a bed with disordered hangings, an open desk with papers overflowing from it to the floor, a chair overturned, even the tapestry upon the walls. But it was at none of these I looked, though I found them all etched into my memory afterwards. It was at a man bound to a chair, at two others who were glancing hastily through the papers they were pulling from the drawers of the desk, at a fourth who was making an iron turn white in the glow of the fire. The man in the chair was watching the door with agonized eyes, but of the faces of the others I could see nothing, for they were masked.

Even as I stood there, palsied by astonishment, the man at the fire drew forth the iron and turned with it sputtering in his hand.

"Come, M. le Comte," he said, "I think this will answer," and he advanced towards the prisoner.

But the girl was through the doorway ere he had taken a second step.

"You curs! You cowards!" she screamed, and ran at him as though to wrench the hissing iron from his hands. But her voice had loosed the chains which bound me, and I sprang after her, drew her back with one hand, and while the man stood for an instant agape at this interruption, ran him through the breast. As he felt my sword in his flesh he raised his hand and threw the iron full at me, but I stepped aside and avoided it, and he fell in a heap on the hearth. The others were upon me almost before I could turn, and with the suddenness of their rush drove me into a corner, where, in truth, I was very glad

to go, and get my back snugly against the wall. The moment I felt their blades against my own I knew I had swordsmen to deal with. For a breath I held them off, then I saw them exchange a glance, and as one knocked up my blade, the other ran me through the shoulder. It had been my heart, but that I sprang to the right. In the instant that followed I saw my chance and thrust full at my opponent, who had left his breast uncovered, but my point rang against a net of steel and the blade shivered in my grasp.

"Well thrust," he said, laughing harshly. "'Tis a pity so pretty a swordsman must die so young. Come, Gaspard, let us finish," and he advanced to thrust again. I had my poniard out, but knew it would be of little service.

And then, as I steeled myself for this last attack, commending my soul to the Virgin, I saw a white arc of sputtering iron sweep through the air and hiss deep into the cheek of the man in armor. He fell back with a terrible cry, and, dropping his sword, clapped his hands to his face. The other stood for an instant dazed, then, with an oath, caught up his companion and plunged into the darkness of the hall without. I heard his footsteps echoing along it for a moment, then all was still. Only the girl stood there with the bar of iron still in her hand.

"I thank you, Mademoiselle," I said. "In another moment I had been beyond assistance."

She smiled at me tremulously and cast the iron down upon the hearth. Plainly, she was not used to scenes of violence, and had small relish for them.

"Come," I continued, "let us release the prisoner," and with my poniard I cut the ropes which encircled him. He arose from the chair unsteadily, stretched his limbs, and looked at me with a good-humored light in his eyes.

"In faith, Monsieur," he said, "you arrived most opportunely. I admit I have no appetite for white-hot iron. I am a man of the pen, not of the sword. Accept my thanks," and he bowed with a certain dignity.

I bowed in return, not to be outdone in courtesy, and then of a sudden I felt my strength drop from me, and sat down limply on the chair from which I had just released him.

"Oh, you are wounded!" cried the girl. "See, uncle, here in his shoulder," and before I could prevent it she had sunk to her knees beside me and was tearing away my doublet. In a trice my shoulder was bare, and she examined the wound with compressed lips, touching it with intelligent fingers that bespoke her convent training.

"It is nothing," I protested weakly. "A mere flesh-wound. Do not trouble about it, I beg of you, Mademoiselle. I shall be myself again in a moment."

But the man interrupted me.

"Nonsense!" he said curtly, and he too looked at the wound. "Claire," he added, "bring a basin of water and a clean rag. We will soon repair this damage."

I followed her with my eyes as she ran to do his bidding. So her name was Claire, and I repeated it over and over to myself, as a man rolls wine in his mouth to get the full flavor. She was soon back, and the wound washed clean and deftly bandaged.

"There," he said at last, "I think that will do. I do not believe the hurt a dangerous one, Monsieur, but you would best consult without delay a more skilful surgeon than either Claire or I. There is only one thing more I can do for you," and he opened a cupboard in the wall and brought out a flask of wine. "Drink this," he said, and handed me a glass brimming over. I drained it at a draught.

"A thousand thanks," I said. "I am quite myself again. I trust Mademoiselle will pardon my momentary weakness."

She smiled happily as she looked at me.

"Oh, yes, Monsieur," she answered after a moment, "I think I could find it in my heart to pardon a much more serious offence," and her face grew rosy with sudden blushes, in fear, doubtless, that she had said too much. I could guess that she had seen little of the world, and that its strangeness frightened her.

Her companion interrupted me before I could find words for a reply.

"May I ask the name of our rescuer? We shall wish always to remember it with gratitude."

"Paul de Marsan," I answered simply.

He started, and I saw the girl's face turn white.

"Liege to the Comte de Cadillac?" he asked quickly.

I bowed.

"I came to Montauban to see him," I said, wondering at his emotion.

"But must you see him?" he persisted.

"At the earliest moment."

He waved his hand with a gesture of despair and stood for a little time, his head bent in thought.

"M. de Marsan," he began at last, "I fear we have done you ill-service by calling you here to-day——"

But I stopped him before he could say more.

"Ill service!" I cried. "Ill service to give my sword a chance at three consummate scoundrels, and me an opportunity of meeting Mademoiselle! Do me a thousand such ill services, Monsieur!"

His was a merry spirit when no danger threatened, and I saw a jest spring to life in his eyes.

"A chance to meet a thousand pretty girls?" he asked.

But he was not to catch me so.

"On the contrary, a thousand chances to meet Mademoiselle," I answered boldly, though the boldness was no deeper than the lips, and from the corner of my eye I saw the girl blush hotly.

He glanced from me to her and back again. The mirth died out of his face, as heat from a bed of ashes, and left it cold and gray.

"I fear that may not be, Monsieur," he said gravely. "Our way is not your way, as you will soon know for yourself. But, at least, I can give you a friend in place of the one you have lost here."

He signed to Claire, and she ran to an adjoining room, returning in a moment with a sword in a scabbard of stout leather.

"Gird him," he said.

She came to me shyly, and taking the old scabbard from my belt, clasped the new one there. I trembled at the touch of her fingers, and gripped my hands behind me to keep my arms from about her. I could see the red blood surging in waves over cheek and neck as I looked down at her, but only when she had finished the task did she lift her eyes to mine for an instant. What eyes they were—dark, lustrous, with the white soul looking out!

"Draw your blade," commanded the other.

As I obeyed and its polished sides caught the firelight I saw it was no ordinary weapon.

"Test it," he said.

I bent it to left and right. It gave in my hands like some living thing.

"'Twill take a stout coat of mail to turn it aside," he said. "'Tis a Toledo."

I flushed with joy at possessing such a weapon and tried to stammer my thanks, but he cut me off.

"There, there," he said, not unkindly. "Keep your thanks. I doubt you will soon find you have little enough cause for gratitude. But 'tis the utmost I can do for you, for 'tis very unlike we shall ever meet again."

"But your name," I stammered. "Surely I may know your name."

He hesitated a moment, then shook his head impatiently, as though casting some weakness from him.

"My name is of small moment," he said. "You may call me Duval. That will serve as well as any other."

"But, Monsieur," I protested, "I hope to see you many times again—you and Mademoiselle," and I stole a glance at her, but her eyes were fixed on the floor.

Duval came to me and took my hand.

"Believe me, M. de Marsan," he said earnestly, "I honor you and

value your friendship highly, but for your own sake you must not meet us again. Indeed, 'twill do you little good to try, since in an hour we shall be far from here, in a country it were death for you to penetrate."

I gazed at him, too astonished to reply.

"I will ask you one more favor," he added. "Will you assist me in carrying yonder fellow to the bed? We must give him a chance, if he has a spark of life left in him."

"Willingly," I answered, and between us we raised the man, who lay where he had fallen, and stretched him on the couch. He gave no sign of life and I thought him done for, but when the doublet was stripped from his breast I saw that the blood was still slowly oozing from the wound which my sword had made. Duval hesitated an instant and then lifted the mask from his face. I had never seen the man before, but he had a strong, bold countenance, with something of power in it.

"That was the master against whose cuirass you broke your sword, M. de Marsan," remarked Duval, and then as he met my inquiring glance he added, "Believe me, I appreciate your courtesy, Monsieur, in refraining from questioning me, but it is a matter it were best for you to know nothing of, even were I at liberty to explain it. And now I must ask you to leave us, for we have much to do."

"We will meet again," I said earnestly as I took his hand.

But he merely shook his head.

"Claire will accompany you to the street," he said, and turned away to his disordered desk.

I followed her without a word along the hallway and down the dark stair; but at the foot I caught her hand and held it.

"Can it be, Mademoiselle," I asked, "that this is adieu? Surely you do not believe so!"

"I fear I must believe so, Monsieur," she answered softly. "Only I wish myself to thank you for your gallantry and courage. They were given to a good cause, believe me."

"And will be given again to the same cause!" I cried. "I warn you, Mademoiselle, that I shall not submit so tamely to this decree of separation."

She pressed my fingers gently and withdrew her hand.

"Come," she said, "I must return," and she went on across the little court and to the gate, which still hung open as we had left it. "Adieu, Monsieur," she said, and held out her hand again.

I raised it to my lips and kissed it.

"It is not adieu," I said. "I will not have it so. I shall see you again many times," but as I looked into her eyes I felt my certainty slipping from me, and with it my self-control.

Perhaps she read my thought, for she drew her hand away and made ready to close the gate.

"Adieu, Monsieur," she repeated, and I saw that her eyes were bright with tears.

I sprang to her and caught both her hands in mine.

"But, Claire," I cried, "at least, tell me that you are sorry; tell me that you care; tell me that you would not have it so!"

She looked up into my face and her lips were quivering.

"I have had many disappointments," she said. "One more will matter little. You must go, Monsieur. To detain me here is to endanger both of us."

"As you will," I said, and I dropped her hands and turned to the gate. "Only in this, Mademoiselle, you shall not be disappointed. I swear it. Au revoir."

I stepped through to the street and turned with bared head and trembling hands for a last glimpse of her. For an instant she held the gate half open and gazed into my eyes. Then she shut it fast, the bar dropped into place, and I heard her footsteps slowly cross the court.

II.

I WALK INTO A HORNET'S NEST

THE vesper bell of a near-by priory waked me out of my thoughts. I remembered with a start that the business which had brought me to Montauban was as yet undone, and I hastened my steps towards the hotel of the Comte de Cadillac, which stood, as I very well knew, on the right bank of the Garonne, as one approaches it from the south along the Rue du Midi. It was not till then that the increasing cold of evening drew my attention to the fact that I no longer had my cloak about me, and I remembered that I had not thought to pick it up again as I passed the place where I had dropped it, so absorbed had I been in my companion. I reflected with satisfaction that I had chosen an old one in which to make this journey, not only that I might be the less an object of notice, but also because I did not know to what vicissitude of weather I might be subjected ere I was back again beside the fire at Marsan.

Night had settled upon the town before I reached the Rue du Midi and turned up towards the river, but I did not slacken my pace until I saw gleaming before me the great torches which at night-time always flamed on either side the wide gate to the Hotel de Cadillac. There was the usual crowd of lacqueys and men-at-arms loitering about it, and I made my way through them without hindrance, across the inner court, and up the steps to the great doorway. Here a sentry stopped me.

"I wish to see M. le Comte," I said. "I have an important message for him from Marsan."

The fellow looked me over for a moment, plainly little impressed by my appearance.

"Very well, Monsieur," he said at last. "Come with me."

Midway of the hall a group had gathered about a man who was talking excitedly, and from the faces of his listeners I judged it was no ordinary bit of gossip he was imparting. I caught a few words as we made a way through the crowd.

"It is most curious," the speaker was saying. "No one can imagine how it occurred. And right across the face too."

"What is it?" I asked my guide when once we were past the crowd. "What has happened?"

But he merely shook his head, as though it were not his business nor mine, and kept on without replying. I promised myself that I should some day repay him twice over for his insolence. The blood is warm at twenty!

He turned to the right through an open doorway and stopped before a man who was walking soberly up and down, his chin in his hand, his brows knitted.

"M. d'Aurilly," he said, "here is a youngster who says he has a message for M. le Comte."

My cheeks flushed at his tone, and I bit my lips to keep back the retort which would have burst from them.

D'Aurilly stopped abruptly in his walk and looked at me.

"That will do, Bricette," he said to the sentry after a moment, and stood looking at me until the sound of his footsteps died away down the corridor. I could see that he was searching me through and through, and no whit abashed, for I come of as good blood as any in Gascony, I gave him look for look.

"So you have a message?" he asked at last.

"Yes, Monsieur," I answered, and as I looked into his face I saw that his eyes glittered under half-closed lids, that his nose arched like an eagle's beak, and that the thick mustachio could not wholly conceal the cruel lines about the mouth. Verily, I thought, there seem to be few pleasant people in the household of M. le Comte de Cadillac.

"And where is this message from?" he continued.

"From Marsan, Monsieur."

"And you are?"

"Paul de Marsan, Monsieur."

He looked at me yet a moment, his eyes glittering behind their veil of lashes like snakes in ambush.

"Very well," he said abruptly. "Give me this message. I will deliver it to M. le Comte."

And he held out his hand.

"Impossible, Monsieur," I answered. "I was instructed to deliver it only to M. le Comte himself."

Again he paused to look me up and down, and I saw the hot color of the south leap to his cheeks.

"Perhaps you do not know that I am the Vicomte d'Aurilly," he sneered at last.

"I heard the sentry call you so, Monsieur," I answered, bowing. I did not add that I thought it strange he should be in the household and seemingly so near the person of M. le Comte—for his estates lay far south on the border of the Pyrenees, and had always been reckoned more Spanish than French.

"Come," he cried roughly, "enough of this play! Give me the message. M. le Comte is ill and will see no one."

"Then I will wait till he is well again, Monsieur," I said as calmly as I could, and made for the door, head in air.

But his voice arrested me.

"Stop, you fool!" he cried.

I turned upon him, all my blood in my face.

"That is not the way one gentleman addresses another, Monsieur," I said between my teeth. "I must ask Monsieur to apologize."

"Apologize!" he cried, purple with rage. "Upon my word, these Gascon paupers are insufferable!"

But I could bear no more. My self-control dropped from me as cloak from shoulder, and I sprang upon him and struck him full in the mouth with my open hand. He had his poniard out in an instant and lunged at me,—which I thought a cowardly thing,—but I stepped back out of harm's reach and whipped out my sword before he could strike a second time. He paused when he saw my point at his breast.

"Now," I said, "perhaps Monsieur will draw and fight like a gentleman, not like a blackguard."

I thought he would choke with rage. And at that instant an inner door opened and a man stepped through. He stopped in amazement as he saw our attitude.

"What is this, d'Aurilly?" he asked sternly. "A duel—and in M. le Comte's antechamber? Surely you know his need of quiet!"

D'Aurilly turned to the newcomer, his face working with passion.

"I was pressed beyond endurance, M. Letourge," he said. "Look at this," and he pointed to the mark of my hand still on his face.

"A blow!" and Letourge looked at me wrathfully. "Who are you, Monsieur, that you dare strike the Vicomte d'Aurilly?"

But my blood was up and my eyes were full on his. In my heart I knew that his eyes were honest eyes and his face an honest face, albeit a stern one.

"A gentleman whom he had insulted, Monsieur," I answered proudly. "We of Marsan permit that from no man."

But Letourge's face had changed. He stood staring at me with starting eyes, as though not able to believe them. Then he pulled himself together and his face became like marble, lighted by two coals of fire.

"You are a bold man, Monsieur," he said at last, in a voice that chilled me, "to set foot in this house. Methinks you will never leave it with your breath in your body."

Now it was my turn to stare.

"Is M. le Comte de Cardillac a second Pharaoh," I asked, "that he should slay his messengers? Had I known that, I had made less haste from Marsan in his service."

Letourge had recovered his self-control, but I saw that his hands were trembling.

"From Marsan?" he repeated. "And when came you from Marsan?"

"An hour ago," I answered.

"And you have a message?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"You lie!" he cried. "You must think our memories marvellous short! M. le Comte does not slay messengers, but he hangs spies. Do you not already feel the rope about your neck, Monsieur?"

I looked into his eyes and saw he was in earnest. What could the man mean? I realized that I had need to keep my wits about me.

"Monsieur," I said with what calmness I could muster, "you have used words to me which you will some day regret. I am Paul de Marsan and no spy. We of Marsan have been liege to Cadillac for two hundred years and have always aided them to fight their battles. I come to warn M. le Comte of a great danger which threatens him, but seem to have fallen into a nest of madmen."

But Letourge looked at me with working lips.

"Think not your tongue can save your head," he sneered. "You have come to the end of the journey. Will you lay down your sword, or shall I call in a dozen lacqueys to take it from you?"

There was but one course for a gentleman to choose. I glanced desperately about the room. He and d'Aurilly stood between me and the door into the outer hall. There was only one other, the door through which he had entered.

"Monsieur," I cried, "I shall not lay down my sword until my hand is powerless to hold it!"

With a cry of rage he sprang towards the hall to summon aid, but with one bound I was at the other door, and felt with joy that it yielded to my touch. As I slammed it shut behind me I saw that it had a bolt

on the inner side, and shot it into place just as those without threw themselves against it. It could hold but a few moments at the most, and I cast my eyes about the room for some way of escape.

I saw that I was in a sleeping-room, the great, curtained bed occupying one side. A single candle burning on a table near it illumined the room but feebly, yet there was light enough to show me a window opposite the bed. I ran to it and threw back the shutter with a crash. The window was barred. I glanced again about the room. There was no other window—no other door but that by which I had entered, and which was already creaking under the blows of those without. I must die here, then, like a rat in a trap. Well, I would not die alone!

"What is this?" cried a voice from the bed. "Name of God! Did I not tell you, Gaspard, that I wanted quiet? Are you pulling the house down? Answer me, man!"

The curtains were pulled apart and a face appeared between them—a horrible face, swollen and bandaged. He listened a moment to the blows and cries without, then got unsteadily to his feet and took a sword from the chair at his bedside, cursing softly to himself the while. And as he turned his eyes fell upon me.

"Who are you?" he asked. "What do you here?"

A spark of hope sprang to life in my breast.

"I am Paul de Marsan," I said. "I have a message for M. le Comte de Cadillac."

He sat down heavily upon a chair.

"Very well," he said. "I am he. But that does not explain this cursed uproar."

My hat was off and I was on my knee before him in an instant. Perhaps here I should get justice. The door was already splitting. I had need to speak quickly.

"M. le Comte," I cried, "believe me, I am your faithful and devoted servant. I have journeyed fifty leagues to bring you a message of great moment to your house. I arrived but a moment since, and when I came here and asked to see you that I might give you this message, I was called a spy, set upon, and threatened with the gibbet."

"But why—why?" he asked.

"I do not know, Monsieur," I answered.

He looked me for an instant in the eyes.

"M. de Marsan," he said, "I believe you. Get behind my chair. I will protect you from these fools."

It was time. Even as he spoke there came a mighty crash against the door, as of a heavy log hurled upon it, and it leaped from its hinges. The mob poured into the room, headed by d'Aurilly and Letourge. For an instant, in the semi-darkness, they did not see me standing there behind their master, then they were upon me with a yell of rage.

But M. le Comte was out of his chair, his sword ready to strike.

"One step more," he cried, "and I strike! Letourge, d'Aurilly, you shall answer for this with your necks! Are you mad?"

The mob stopped on the instant. Plainly they knew that when their master struck, he struck home.

"He is a spy, Monsieur!" cried Letourge. "He hath come hither to assassinate you—to complete the work he began in the Rue Gogard!"

M. le Comte started round upon me, his eyes wild with passion. He snatched the candle from the table and thrust it near my face, his lips a-quiver. He held it a moment so, and then set it down again.

"M. de Marsan," he said, in a voice shaking with rage, "what bravado brought you here I cannot guess, or what hope you could have had that once my hand was on you, you could escape my vengeance!"

I stood staring at him with open mouth. Had he too gone mad?

"Were it not for this wound which crazes me," he went on after a moment, "I would have you hung this instant. But I myself am hungering to see you kick your life out at a rope's end, so we must defer that pleasure till to-morrow. Take him, men!" he added, and stepped suddenly away from me.

They came on with a yell, and I had but time to slash open the face of the first one, when they had me down, and I thought for a moment would tear me limb from limb. But their master quieted them with the back of his sword as he would have quieted a pack of hounds.

"To the lower dungeon with him!" he cried, and stood watching as they dragged me away, his hands to his face, his eyes dark with pain and rage. I would have spoken even then, and the words might have saved me, but that d'Aurilly clapped his hand upon my mouth, and with a curse bade me hold my tongue. Out into the hall they dragged me, using me more roughly now that they were from under their master's eyes, and down a long flight of steps. At the stair-foot they paused a moment and I heard the rattle of bolts. A door was clanged back and I was pitched forward into the inky pit beyond.

III.

I FIND THE KEY TO THE PUZZLE

I LAY for some time where I had fallen, nursing my bruises and reflecting with bitterness upon the singular gratitude of princes. I was dazed by the suddenness, the unexpectedness, of it all. What had I done that I should be treated so? And then, of a sudden, a flash of light broke in upon me and brought me to my feet. What was it Letourge had said, "He will finish the work he began in the Rue Gogard." The Rue Gogard was where I had met Claire. Could it be that it was Letourge and M. le Comte whom I had resisted there; that it was into

the face of M. le Comte himself that white-hot iron had seared? I shuddered as I recalled the hiss of the iron into his flesh, the smell of burning, his cry of agony? Small wonder he should thirst for vengeance! Death on the gibbet would be merciful beside the torture which he had suffered and which he must suffer still.

I sat down again to think it out. Yes, there could be no doubt of it—I had been blind not to see it before. The man in armor had been called “M. le Comte” in Duval’s room; he had called his companion Gaspard, and it was Gaspard whom he had cursed from his bed. Gaspard, of course, was Letourge. And then Duval’s despair when I had told him who I was—oh, there could be no doubt of it! And in a breath I saw the full peril of my position.

Here, then, was I, Paul de Marsan, about to be hanged by order of the Comte de Cadillac, whose family we of Marsan had served faithfully for two centuries and more, and whose favor I had thought to win. It had remained for me to be the first to betray him—though how was I to know?—and to be the first of the Marsans to die with a rope about his neck. I saw tumbling about my ears all those pretty castles in the air which I had spent so much time in building while floating along the Midouze or taking a lesson with the sword from old Maître Perigneau, who had tested his art by my father’s side—and my grandfather’s, as well—in a hundred battles. It is not a pleasant thing when one is only twenty, with a heart warm for adventure, to see just ahead the end of the path—and such an end! More shaken than I cared to own, I rose again to my feet and determined to find out the nature of this place into which I had been cast. Perhaps I might yet escape, and M. le Comte would be less vengeful once his wound had healed.

The cell was not large, as I discovered by feeling my way along the walls, all of great stones, delicately fitted,—ten feet square at the most,—and the low, iron-studded door the only opening. Plainly, I could not go out until that door was opened, and the path from it to the gibbet seemed like to be a short one. I stood for a time leaning against it. At last, overcome by weariness and despair, I sank down into one corner and dropped into a troubled sleep.

Then, of a sudden, I awoke to feel my wrists seized by iron hands and twisted behind me. I struggled till my heart seemed like to burst, certain that this was the end, but those great hands clung to me and would not be shaken off.

“Hold him so,” a voice whispered, and the hands tightened.

I lay still, the sweat starting from my forehead, waiting the blow that would end it. A hand tore the doublet from my breast,—there was a moment’s silence broken only by the crackling of a paper,—then the voice whispered again,—

"Strike him!"

A great blow fell upon my head.

I opened my eyes to find a tall fellow bending over me and dashing water into my face. Another stood near by holding a torch. A flare of light came from the doorway, and I heard voices and the clank of arms without.

"He's coming round," said the fellow with the torch, seeing my eyes open. "He must have struck his head when we pitched him in here. Lucky for us his skull is thick. Again, Blatot."

And the other deluged me again with water.

I sat upright, sputtering, dazed, suffocated.

"What is it?" I asked so soon as I could get my breath. "Do you want to choke me?"

"No, we'll leave that to the hangman," answered Blatot grimly. "Just now we are to take you before M. le Comte. I advise you to go quietly."

"I will go gladly," I said, for I had feared another answer. Besides, now that I held the key to the puzzle, I might find a way out. "Lead the way."

They fell into place about me and we toiled up the steps to the hall above. As we reached the stair-head I saw it was full day. Down the hall we turned, into the room where I had first met d'Aurilly, and across it to the chamber beyond.

It was crowded with M. le Comte's retainers, and they must have got some wind of my adventure, for a hum of anger greeted my entrance. M. le Comte himself was seated in a great fauteuil, his face still bandaged, but seemingly giving him less pain than it had the night before. D'Aurilly stood beside him, and he smiled maliciously as he noted my torn and disordered clothing, drenched with water, and the bruises on my head and face. Plainly he had not forgot that blow on the mouth—at which I did not greatly wonder, for neither should I have forgot it.

"M. de Marsan," said M. le Comte, when I stood before him, "I have had you brought here in place of ordering you straight to the gallows that you may answer certain questions I have to ask of you. 'Twill be wise on your part to answer them fully and truthfully."

"I shall be glad to answer every question Monsieur may please to ask," I answered, overjoyed that he should begin so mildly. "I shall be only too happy to tell Monsieur everything I know."

"That is well," and his brow cleared a little. "You may perhaps yet save your neck. Now answer me. Where was it you last saw the Duc de Roquefort?"

"M. le Comte," I answered simply, "I have never in my whole life seen the Duc de Roquefort."

His brows contracted and he brought his hand down with a crash upon the arm of his chair.

"By God! M. de Marsan," he cried, "you seem to set small value on that head of yours! You will be denying next that it was you who came to the rescue of that cursed, cowardly henchman of his, Brissac, just when I had him where he must have given up certain papers. You will be denying that it was you who spitted Bastien, who caused me to suffer this wound across the face," and he pointed to his bandaged cheek with a terrible gesture that sent the blood back to my heart.

"I deny nothing, Monsieur," I protested, "but I beg you to believe that I did not know it was you I was resisting or your enemies I was aiding."

"M. le Comte," broke in d'Aurilly, with an evil light in his eyes, "has not this farce gone far enough? Why keep this liar longer from the rope?"

"Why, indeed?" repeated M. le Comte, looking at me darkly. "Do you persist in your denials, M. de Marsan?"

And then of a sudden I remembered the message. With feverish fingers I sought to draw it from my bosom—it was not there! In a flash I understood—the assault in the dungeon, the tearing of my doublet, the rustling of a paper!

"It has been stolen!" I cried hoarsely, my throat on fire. "Some one has stolen it from me!"

I caught d'Aurilly's eyes on mine, and my heart grew hot with hate as I marked the sneer on his lips.

"What has been stolen?" demanded M. le Comte impatiently. "No tricks, M. de Marsan!"

I clinched my hands to still their trembling until the blood started beneath the nails.

"M. le Comte," I began, "hear me to the end. I came to Montauban from Marsan as fast as horse could carry me that I might place in your hand a message which concerns you deeply. You know what my reception was, but you do not know that after I had been thrown into yonder dungeon someone crept upon me while I slept and tore the message from my bosom. See, here is where I carried it. You have a traitor in your house, Monsieur!"

His face was red, and I could hear the stir in the circle of men-at-arms behind me. Only d'Aurilly laughed harshly.

"A pretty story!" he cried. "A brazen lie! Does not your patience near an end, M. le Comte?"

But I looked only at my master. Surely he must see that I spoke the truth!

"M. le Comte will remember," I concluded, "that I told him of this message in his sleeping-room, but he would not hear me out. The

one who robbed me must have known I carried it, yet I told no one save yourself, the sentry at the outer door, M. Letourge, and—the Vicomte d'Aurilly."

I was looking full at him now, and I think he read the meaning of my look, for his face went white, and I could see his hand gripping his sword-hilt. And in that instant I knew who the traitor was!

"Good God, M. le Comte!" he burst out, "do you permit us to be insulted by this scoundrel?"

But my master waved him to silence. His face was very stern and his voice cold as steel when he spoke again.

"You make grave charges, M. de Marsan," he said,—"so grave that either your head or another's will fall. Do you know the contents of this message?"

"I do, Monsieur," I answered, and I saw d'Aurilly go white again. "I have been trying to tell it you. I learned it by rote that I might repeat it in case I was intercepted and so compelled to destroy it. I had not foreseen it would be stolen from me at my journey's end."

"Well, repeat it then, man!" he cried, moving in his seat uneasily. "Out with it!"

"M. le Duc de Roquefort," I repeated, "'has learned of the presence of Madame la Comtesse at the Château de Cadillac, together with Mademoiselle, her daughter. He has learned also that not above thirty men can be mustered to defend the place. He designs to carry it by surprise and to take prisoner Madame and Mademoiselle, confident that with them as hostages he can secure certain concessions from M. le Comte. There is need of haste!'"

I could hear the crowd behind me breathing hard. A murmur of rage and astonishment ran from mouth to mouth, and I heard the rattle of a hundred scabbards as hand fell to hilt. M. le Comte was trembling with emotion.

"And the signature!" he cried, bending down from his chair till his eyes glared into mine. "The signature, Monsieur!"

"I know nothing of the signature," I said. "It was not given to me."

"But whence came the message? Prove to me that it is genuine—that it may be believed!"

"M. le Comte," I said as calmly as I could, for the blood was beginning to sing in my ears, "permit me to tell my story. Three nights ago a stranger rode up to Marsan. He bore the message which I have just repeated. My father, who recognized the messenger by some secret sign which I know nothing of, ordered out his horse at once that he himself might bring it to Montauban. But my father is growing old, as you know, Monsieur; besides, in cold, wet weather his wounds trouble him greatly. I begged that I might come in his

stead. I was eager to be of service to our master—to prove to him my loyalty and address. At last my father yielded. I should have his horse. The stranger gave me the paper sealed. He repeated to me its contents—three, four times, until I knew them word for word. Then he sprang to horse and disappeared in the night. Five minutes later I was on the road to Montauban. By noon of the next day I had reached the Losse, and here I was compelled to stop to rest my horse. Evening saw me en route again. At midnight I reached Comdan; dawn found me at Lestoure. An hour's rest, and we pressed on. At noon we had reached the Garonne. We forded it, and I thought soon to reach Montauban, when, of a sudden, my horse fell lame. He grew worse at every step, until he was no longer able to proceed. There was no house in sight, so I left him by the roadside and hastened on afoot. As evening came I entered Montauban from the west."

I paused a moment at what I had yet to tell.

"Yes, yes!" cried my listener. "Continue, Monsieur; and then?"

"And then, M. le Comte," I said, "as I was hastening along the Rue Gogard a woman burst from a gate and appealed to me for help. Without pausing to reflect, I followed her. The rest you know."

He sat for a moment looking at me.

"In faith, Monsieur," he said at last, "if what you say is true,—and it hath a certain ring of truth about it,—you are not so greatly at fault as I had thought. I reprieve you from the gallows till I have tested your story. M. de Fronsac," he added, to a young man who stood near by, "I commit M. de Marsan to your care. See that he does not escape."

Fronsac bowed and took his place at my side.

"See that he is provided with new equipage," added M. le Comte, with a gleam of humor in his eye as he looked at me; "he hath need of it." And then he rose from his seat and his voice took a sterner ring. "Messieurs," he cried, "you have heard this message, and can guess how nearly it touches us. Whether it be true or false, we will soon determine. Arm yourselves!"

D'Aurilly, leaning on his chair, interrupted him.

"Do you mean, M. le Comte," he asked disdainfully, "that you intend to set out on this fool's errand?"

My master shot him a swift glance, in which I saw suspicion spring to life.

"It may be, as you say, a fool's errand, M. le Vicomte," he answered. "Should it prove so, this liar will lose his head. But should it appear that he spoke truth,"—he paused, his eyes still on d'Aurilly,—"should it appear that he spoke truth, it will not be his head that falls. In either case, a spy and traitor will get his dues."

D'Aurilly's eyes were on the floor, but he kept countenance well.

"I am quite ready for the test, M. le Comte," he said quietly. "Nothing will delight me more than to see a traitor get his dues."

"Nor me," assented M. le Comte, and looked at him a moment longer. Then he turned again to his men with fire in his eyes. "Arm yourselves, Messieurs!" he cried. "In twenty minutes we must be en route to Cadillac. Should this dog of a Roquefort, who dares fight only women, have been there before us, we will follow him even to his den in the Pyrenees and drag him forth like the cur he is! A outrance!"

They heard him with gleaming eyes and mantling cheeks. I could hear their swords rattling, eager to leap from the sheath. The lust of blood was on them, and they caught up the cry as their master ended,—

"A outrance!"

Up and down the corridors it echoed as they rushed for the door, cheering, shouting, cursing. They bore the news along the hall and out into the court, whence, in a moment, again came the cry,—

"A outrance!"

And the good people of Montauban, hearing it, hurried to their homes and barred their doors, for they knew that the hounds of Cadillac were loose again.

IV.

I AM FORTUNATE IN FINDING A FRIEND

How it thrilled me—that cry echoing up and down the corridors! What would I not have given for the chance to ride forth, thigh to thigh with these lusty ruffians, to give and take good blows! Instead of that, here was I a prisoner—and at the thought my eyes turned to my companion.

He laughed as he caught my glance.

"Come, M. de Marsan," he said, "your face is an open book. You are longing to fare out with these blood-letters. You heard M. le Comte instruct me to secure you a new equipage. Besides, I doubt not you stand in need of meat and drink. So come,—for twenty minutes is not a long time."

His last words, spoken after a moment's teasing hesitation, brought the hot blood to my cheek.

"Twenty minutes!" I stammered. "We go also, then, Monsieur?"

"Assuredly," he laughed. "Come."

I followed him from the room blindly, unable to speak, trembling with excitement. What a chance! What fortune! I would show whether I or that cursed, hawk-faced d'Aurilly was to be believed! It made my blood boil to think of his cool insolence,—his black treachery,—for in my heart of hearts I was certain that it was he who had stolen my letter—but to prove it, there was the problem!

Down the stair we went to a great room piled with arms, where a

mob of crazy men were already choosing what they needed. With great joy I found my own sword among a pile of others,—its leathern scabbard did not proclaim the Toledo within, thank Heaven!—and in five minutes was armed with pistolets and poniard, clothed in a very handsome suit of black, with great boots, whose spurs clanked most merrily as I rattled down the stair behind my friend—for such, even in the few minutes I had known him, I was determined he should be.

“Now for food,” he said, and I was not sorry to follow him into a room on the lower floor where there was a long table piled with meat and drink. “In faith, I have need of it myself,” he added as he dropped into the seat at my right, but his appetite was far from keeping pace with mine.

As I ate I looked at him, and my heart warmed to his frank face and honest eyes. Young he still was,—not more than a year or two my senior,—but there was that in his air which proclaimed the soldier and man of affairs, accustomed to the smiles of fortune and quite ready to coerce her should she attempt to turn her face away. I had already realized my helplessness without a friend in this great house, and I blessed the chance that had thrown me into this man’s keeping.

“Do you know, M. de Marsan,” he said suddenly, “I was quite moved by that little tale of yours. I was certain that M. le Comte could not doubt it.”

“Thank you, Monsieur,” I answered. “I mean to prove that it was true.”

“And I am sure you will succeed,” he said heartily. “But, my faith, how unfortunate it was that you should happen along the Rue Gogard just when you did! A moment earlier or later, and M. le Comte would perhaps be in position to bring the Duc de Roquefort to his knees. Small wonder he was vexed at you—more especially since he received that hideous scar across the face, which will stay with him always.”

“I regret that I was such a marplot,” I said, “but I could not well do other than I did. When a woman asks for aid——”

“And a young and pretty woman, was she not, Marsan?” asked my companion, smiling at me broadly.

“Yes,” I admitted, “young and pretty. Do you know her, Monsieur?”

He smiled more broadly still.

“I think I can guess. Did you not hear her name?”

“The man who was with her called her Claire.”

He nodded.

“That is she. Small wonder you leaped to follow her! Claire de Brissac, but six months out of the good sisters’ keeping, yet already the toast of the whole valley of the Garonne. It has never been my

good fortune to meet her, but such tales as we have heard! 'Tis said Roquefort himself is mad about her, and a month since Rumor had them wedded, but at the last the affair hung fire—through some caprice on her part, 'tis said. She would do well to wed him while she can," he added. "He may not choose to call a priest the second time."

"But her father," I said, "her uncle—will not they protect her?"

Fronsac laughed.

"Her uncle—pouf! He is nothing—a man of words—a man of some wit perhaps, but a man who cleans Roquefort's shoes. He has no spirit, not even enough to compel the girl's obedience, else had she been Madame la Duchesse long ere this. Her father was a man, though, —Sieur de Brissac,—perhaps you have heard of him? He stood upright at Roquefort's side, eye to eye, and his daughter is worthy of him.

"It behooves Roquefort to marry," continued Fronsac after a moment. "He has no issue. His next of kin is a cousin—a Spaniard whom he hates. He hath been married once, a virago from Valladolid, where his cousin also dwells. She made his life a burden, 'tis said, and with it all gave him no children. 'Twas more than man could bear. One morning she was found dead at the cliff-foot—an ugly story."

I understood now why Brissac's face had hardened when he had scented a romance in the air. He destined the girl for other things.

"But what was Brissac's business here?" I asked at length.

"There are strange rumors afoot, Marsan," and my companion lowered his voice and glanced about to see that no one else could hear. "It is said that Roquefort, who, living there in the Pyrenees, is already more than half Spanish, is trying to persuade the towns of the Midi to revolt against the King and aid an army of invasion which Spain will provide. Brissac, it is said, came to Montauban to spread the intrigue here, where there is already a very pretty nest of malcontents. Fortunately, M. le Comte has a friend in Roquefort's household—as you should know, since you brought a message from him—and learned of Brissac's mission. This mission, you understand, this plan of Roquefort's, is all in the air—there is no proof of it; but M. le Comte believed there were in Brissac's possession certain papers which would give all the proof needed. So he determined to corner Brissac, examine his papers, and if he found the ones he sought, lay them before the King. Besides, M. le Comte could kill two birds with one stone—he would do his King a signal service, and by the same stroke be rid forever of his enemy. But it was a matter which required finesse—so he determined himself to execute the clever little coup which you spoiled yestereve."

"Yes, yes," I said, understanding for the first time, and fell a moment silent, turning over this bit of news. "Monsieur," I asked, "what is the cause of the feud between the houses of Cadillac and Roquefort?"

Fronsac shrugged his shoulders.

"I do not know," he answered. "It hath been in the blood for a century. It started, I have heard, in some absurd question of precedence. It is the old story of the frog and the mouse who found it impossible to dwell in peace together. If Roquefort hath sacked Cadillac, there will be some merry work ere we return to Montauban."

I smiled, for this was my first taste of battle, and it pleased me mightily. Besides, I had not only to win my spurs, but to prove also to M. le Comte that I was no liar.

"Monsieur," I said, "permit me to assure you that you will have no cause to watch me. I am too anxious to see this expedition through. My honor is at stake, and I mean to prove that it is not I but another who is the traitor. But tell me something of the Vicomte d'Aurilly. How comes he in this household?"

I could feel my companion's eyes searching my face, but I did not meet his gaze, fearing that he might read my thought.

"The Vicomte d'Aurilly," he said quietly at last, "belongs to one of the oldest families of the Basses Pyrenees. Unhappily, the fortunes of his house have declined greatly, but this hath not lessened his pride, as you may have perceived. He is in this household because he is a suitor for the hand of Mademoiselle Valérie, daughter of M. le Comte."

For a moment I saw my theory falling into bits. If d'Aurilly were a suitor for Mademoiselle, why should he betray her into Roquefort's hands?

"Only," added my companion, in a lower tone and with a certain look that drew from me a second glance, "I believe he is an unsuccessful suitor. It is said that M. le Comte had the goodness to consult his daughter in the matter and that she would have none of it."

Well, that was different—that gave me the key to d'Aurilly's motive! There was a tone in my companion's voice which drew my eyes again to his face—he was staring at the table before him distraught, seeing nothing. It seemed to me that I could read his secret, and of a sudden I determined to tell him my theory. I glanced around and saw that the room was almost empty.

"M. de Fronsac," I began, "for what I am about to tell you I have no proof, yet I believe myself not far beside the mark. And first let me assure you on my honor that I am what I claim to be, Paul de Marsan, liege to M. le Comte, and that I brought a message to him. That message was stolen from me, as you have heard. I believe, Monsieur, that d'Aurilly was the thief."

My companion started round upon me, all his blood in his face.

"I believe, furthermore," I added, "that it was d'Aurilly who informed Roquefort of the defenceless condition of Cadillac. Perhaps

he hath determined that if he cannot get Mademoiselle in one way, he will get her in another."

Fronsac sat for a moment looking at me, his eyes dark, his brows knitted.

"Soul of God!" he breathed at last. "If you should be right! How M. le Comte's wrath would search him out and consume him! Yet, if he succeed, he will have Mademoiselle Valérie for hostage—he could dictate terms. What a plot—the more one thinks of it, the prettier it becomes!" Then he turned to me suddenly. "M. de Marsan," he said impetuously, "we must be friends. We two, alone, must set about the unveiling of this scoundrel."

He held out his hand, and I grasped it warmly.

"Nothing would please me more, Monsieur," I said with a great lightening of the heart. "I covet you for a friend."

"And I you."

He looked into my eyes for a moment, and I read truth and manhood there. So it was settled.

I could see that he was in a fever of impatience to be off, and just as I pushed my platter from me the call to horse sounded from without. We hurried down into the court, where there was a great tangle of men and beasts. Through this we pushed, my companion leading the way, to the place where our horses, which he had ordered from the stables, awaited us. My mount was a great, mettlesome sorrel, and I looked him over with exultation, for we had none such in our stable at Marsan.

A moment later M. le Comte himself strode down the steps into the court, his face still bandaged, and gave the signal to mount. We sprang to saddle on the instant, and it was wonderful to see how that mob resolved itself into a little army. Out through the gate we swung, three hundred strong, the standards—azure; on a bend or a laurel tree sinople—floating gayly in front.

The great gate clanged shut behind us, and I saw that even a small garrison could hold the place, so admirably was it fitted for defence. The sun was shining from a sky unclouded, and we made a brave show as we clattered through the narrow streets of the town, the crowd looking on from either side. Some of them cheered, but the most were silent and gazed at us with no friendly eyes, and I saw that even in Montauban M. le Comte's couch was not an easy one. At last we were out in the open country and struck into a gait which soon left the walls far behind.

I glanced back for a last look at the town, and saw M. le Comte riding moodily along near the rear of the column. To his left rode Sieur Letourge, to his right d'Aurilly.

V.

THE RIDE TO CADILLAC

M. LE COMTE's château of Cadillac stood upon the east bank of the Garonne, some ten leagues to the south of Montauban. My father had taken me thither once, when I was a mere boy,—what business called him there I do not know,—and I remembered quite clearly the great house, with its high, graceful central tower, its broad wings, and the pretty park in front, sloping sweetly down to the river's edge. It beseeemed me at the time that the palace of the King of France must be less beautiful; but, alas, one's eyes grow more critical with age!

Our road for a time lay through the wide valley of the river, and as we swung onward I sat erect in the saddle and drank in great draughts of the cool air—so sweet, so pure, such as one finds only here in Gascony. It was good to be alive, in such gallant company, with prospect of hard blows and, perchance, glory at the end. I stole a glance at Fronsac, not doubting that he shared my exultation, and was astonished to see him riding with rein loose and head bent and eye lack-lustre. He surprised my glance and smiled as he looked at me.

"The question, my friend," he said, "is, shall we be in time?"

I did not answer. I confess I did not wish the adventure to end so speedily and tamely. Besides, I had a great desire to see for myself the Duc de Roquefort's stronghold in the Pyrenees, for I had heard it was well worth seeing.

"When was it you left Marsan?" he asked after a moment.

"At midnight on the twenty-fourth."

"And this is the twenty-seventh. On the morning of the twenty-fifth, doubtless, the Duc de Roquefort left his seat at Marleon and started for M. le Comte's château. By pushing his horses he might have reached Tarbes that night. By evening of yesterday he should have been at Aurignac, and he may get to the château by noon to-day. If he hath carried out this programme, we shall be too late."

"But, Monsieur," I protested, "it may be that he did not set out from Marleon until the twenty-sixth, or some accident may have happened to delay him. Besides, he could not have gone by the direct route, since he was penetrating M. le Comte's country. It is only by great diligence that he could reach the château to-day."

"True," assented my companion gloomily, "yet the Duc de Roquefort is always diligent—else he would not have dared undertake this expedition. He is a great gambler, ready to stake his head on the turn of a card. Some day he will lose, but it seems this time that he must win."

"Grant that he does reach the château at noon to-day," I said, "still, even with only thirty men, Madame la Comtesse should be able

to hold out against him for some hours—and five or six hours are all that we shall need.”

“True,” and my companion nodded again, “Madame is not the woman to yield the château without a struggle. But what if she be surprised, if she be not expecting an assault, if the gates be open—what then, Monsieur?”

“Then,” I cried boldly, “we will spur after them, even to their castle in the Pyrenees! M. le Comte himself hath said it!”

But Fronsac shook his head.

“You have never visited Marleon, have you, M. de Marsan?” he asked.

“No, Monsieur, I have never been farther south than Lembeye.”

“The castle of M. de Roquefort stands on a height above the town, and is approached only by a single, narrow road, where two men can scarcely walk abreast. The Duc du Poitiers, with an army of three thousand men, once assaulted it in vain. It will not soon yield to force.”

“If not to force, then to stratagem!” I cried.

“Quite right,” chuckled a low voice behind us. “If not to force, then to stratagem. Well said!”

I turned with a start to see that it was the Sieur Letourge, who had ridden close to us without our perceiving it, and who had overheard my last words.

“M. de Fronsac,” he continued, bowing, and urging his horse nose to nose with mine, “M. le Comte wishes to speak with you. Do you fall back and join him. I will endeavor to entertain our friend here,” and he nodded to me.

Fronsac obeyed without a word, and for some moments my new companion and I rode side by side in silence. I glanced at him narrowly from time to time, for this was the first that I had seen him in the light of day and close at hand. A tall, raw-boned man, whose hair was turning gray, and whose stern face, with its arched nose, deep-set eyes, firm mouth, and aggressive chin, told of the will which knew not how to accept defeat. Not a pleasant face, perhaps, yet a strong one, an honest one, and one which drew my eyes to it with a kind of fascination. This was the man, as I well knew, who for some score of years had been the right hand of M. le Comte, who had done more than any other to confirm his rule from Rieux to Montauban, and to impress his neighbors, the Duc de Roquefort among the number, with a hearty respect for his heavy fist—his heavy fist, that is, the two or three hundred reckless rogues whom he held in leash and let loose from time to time to punish some contumacious lordling or frighten into subjection a rebellious peasantry. Ah, how the peasants hated him,—this man, Letourge,—who had pulled himself up from among

them by sheer strength of will and straightway forgot his kinship with them! He could not serve two masters, so he served M. le Comte, and served him well.

He caught my glance, and smiled grimly as he looked into my eyes.

"You were talking of storming Roquefort's castle at Marleon?" he asked.

"Yes, Monsieur."

"'Twill be no easy task."

"But it may not be needful. We may reach the château in time."

He shook his head, as Fronsac had done.

"Had we set out last night," he said. "Had we permitted you to deliver your message straightway! I can see now that I played the fool. Yet the sight of you there in M. le Comte's antechamber took my wits away. You spoke a true word, M. de Marsan, when you told me I should regret my wrath."

I looked at him eagerly.

"Then you too believe my story, M. Letourge?" I asked quickly.

He gave me one look from under his eyebrows.

"Surely," he answered. "Babes scarce out of leading-strings do not invent lies so glibly. They seem ready, though, to run to the aid of the first woman they hear squawking!"

I flushed at his tone, but checked the retort which sprang to my lips. After all, I had doubtless much to learn.

"But though we may not reach Cadillac in time, we may yet win the race," he added. "You have noted, perhaps, that we are saving the horses. Should we push forward at full speed to Cadillac, that would be the end—we could go no farther. As it is, we are starting on a long journey, and Roquefort may be hard put to it ere he gets back again behind his battlements at Marleon."

He fell silent again, looking so stern and inflexible that I had not the heart to address him. Yet it seemed to me that M. le Comte was in error. Even if the whole force were not sent forward, it would be wise, I thought, to send a small party at full speed to attempt to warn Madame. But this was my first campaign, so why should I venture to advise?

At last I heard the gallop of a horse's feet behind us, and Fronsac rode up, his eyes agleam with excitement.

"Such fortune!" he cried, as he pulled up his horse beside mine. "Do you know to what M. le Comte has consented, my friend? It is that you and I shall ride on together, full speed, to Cadillac."

It was my thought—so I was not a fool, after all!

"You forget," interrupted Letourge drily, "that M. de Marsan is a prisoner."

"And in my charge," said Fronsac proudly. "M. le Comte entrusts him to me. I will answer for him."

"Thank you, Monsieur," I said, my face aglow with pleasure. "I shall not forget your kindness. When do we set out?"

"At once!" cried Fronsac, and clapped spur to flank.

With a last glance at Letourge, who was looking at us with amused eyes, I sped after him, and in a moment we were past the troop, with only the open road before us. Neck and neck we went for half an hour or more, my heart bounding at the rapid motion, and then we drew rein to give our mounts a breathing-spell.

"What a chance!" cried my companion, lifting his hat and wiping the sweat from his brow. "Do you know, Marsan, there is an adventure before us? I believe we shall reach the château ahead of Roquefort and his rascals!"

"I trust so," I said. "It would be a privilege to be in time to warn Madame."

"And Mademoiselle," he added.

"Of course, and Mademoiselle," I assented, smiling to myself.

"Then come!" he cried, "spur on again!"

And spur on again we did, under the trees of the river road, down to the ford and across, then straight over-country as the river bent away westward, the peasants' huts flying past us and the workers in the fields straightening themselves with cracking joints to get a glimpse of us. An hour of this riding, and we were back at the river's bank, where we stopped to wind and water our horses. Then across the river again, with Muret on our left, and only two leagues to go. But noon was long since past, and I saw Fronsac, with anxious eyes, mark the declining sun. Still on and on we went, and I could feel my mount trembling between my knees. Plainly there was no question here of sparing horses.

"Around that bend, up the hill beyond, and we are there!" cried my companion at last. "Look to your pistols!"

I drew them from their holsters, one after the other, and assured myself that they were primed and ready for service.

In a moment we were around the bend of the road, and before us lay a long, gentle slope. Up this we spurred, and there beneath us in the valley stood the château, peaceful and smiling under the bright sun of the Midi. I could see half a dozen lacqueys lolling about the great gate. But it was not at them I looked. It was at a gleam of arms and warlike equipage which was just topping the opposite slope, and my heart leaped, for I knew that it must be the force of Roquefort.

There was a thrill in that moment worth a year of life. How my blood sang!

But no pausing there! Again the spur, and down the slope we

rushed, our mounts responding gamely with a last burst of speed. Roquefort's men must have seen us in the same instant and understood our mission, for they came tearing down the other slope to head us off. The cries, the beat of horses' hoofs, the rattle of arms, reached to the château. At a glance, I saw the lacqueys laboring at the great gates—we should be in time—the château was safe—we would win the race!

Then, of a sudden, came a shrill, frenzied cry from my companion, and he jerked his horse about and galloped full course towards the river. For an instant I thought him seized with sudden madness, but as my eyes followed him I saw a sight which made my heart stand still.

Almost on the river bank an arbor had been built, and at its door a girl was standing. I saw at a glance her beauty and the richness of her dress. It must be Mademoiselle—it could be no other! In a flash I too had pulled my horse around and galloped after my companion. Thank God, there was not far to go!

"This way, this way, Valérie!" cried Fronsac, standing up in his stirrups, frenzied with excitement.

She stood for an instant confused, uncertain, looking at him. Then she sped towards him, her face alight.

I thought for a breath that he must ride her down, but he jerked his horse back upon its haunches, leaned down, and swung her to the saddle before him. She threw her arms about him and laid her head upon his breast. I felt my eyes grow wet with sudden tears as I saw the tenderness of that gesture.

It seemed given in the face of death, for down the slope at us thundered Roquefort's rascals. There was no escape—yet a man must not die unavenged, and I snatched my pistols out and fired at the leaders. I saw one of them grimace in agony; down he came, headlong; a horse stumbled and fell, throwing another off its feet. I tried to pull my mount aside, but in an instant the flood of cursing men and tangled, kicking horses had overwhelmed me and borne me down, then caught me up again and hurled me down the hill. I caught a glimpse of my companion standing at bay, his back to the river, his fair burden still in his arms, still gazing up into his face—what an instant for a man to die! Then the flood was over me again and crushed the light away.

VI.

I TASTE OF ROQUEFORT'S TEMPER

"AGAIN!" cried a rude voice, and some unseen power plucked me up and thrust me under water. It was icy cold, and I felt dimly, without caring greatly, that I was suffocating. Then I was drawn forth again—ah, how sweet the good air was! I drew a long breath and opened my eyes.

The river was flowing at my feet. A sturdy knave supported me on either side and looked questioningly at a man who stood two paces off. It was they who had plunged me under water. Hot with rage, I tried to shake them off, but they held me as though I were a child.

"That is better!" cried the man. "He seems to have come to his senses. Stand him against that tree."

They led me to the tree he pointed out and stood me up against it. I wiped the water from my eyes and looked about me again. This time I understood. I was a prisoner, and the man directing the affair was no doubt the Duc de Roquefort. He came close to me where I stood, still trembling with exhaustion.

"I presume you see the desperate nature of your case," he said coolly, his deep-set eyes glittering full into mine. He had a swarthy face, not uncomely, though lined with passion, and his eyes were like a basilisk's. "You will see it still more clearly when I assure you that there is only one possible way for you to save your life—that is by answering truthfully all my questions."

He paused a moment as though to permit his words to sink deep into my consciousness. There was need that I should think quickly. I glanced towards the château and saw that the gates were closed and the tower manned. I looked at Roquefort's troops, dismounted, lolling in the edge of the wood along the river, waiting his pleasure. One group, however, was still under arms, and my pulse leaped as I saw they were on guard with Fronsac and Mademoiselle in their midst. If by some lie I could hold Roquefort here for two hours or even less, M. le Comte might yet be in time for rescue. I felt my captor's eyes on mine and turned away for fear he would read my thought.

"You understand?" he asked, after a moment.

I nodded.

"And you agree?"

"Proceed, Monsieur," I said.

"You were with Cadillac?" he asked.

"At Montauban—yes, Monsieur."

"Come, no lies. He is near by."

"No nearer than Montauban, Monsieur."

He glared at me for a moment, but my strength had come back to me, and this time I could meet his eyes without shrinking.

"Then what do you and Fronsac here?" he demanded.

"My friend carries a message to Madame," I answered readily, glad to find an answer that was near the truth. "He chose me to ride hither with him."

He looked at me yet a moment, then turned away and gazed towards the château, twisting his mustaches and muttering to himself.

"If I had proof—if I had proof—there would yet be time to capture the woman too and send this pretty place up in smoke!"

He turned again to me with those snake's eyes of his agleam.

"Is this true?" he demanded between his teeth. "Tell me again, is this true? Think well before you answer. A lie will cost you such hours of agony as you have never dreamed of."

"There is M. de Fronsac," I suggested. "Ask him also."

He laughed harshly.

"M. de Fronsac prefers to hold his tongue," he said. "Think you I should have troubled to bring you back to life otherwise. Answer me. Is this true?"

"It is true," I repeated.

"Very good. I am going to believe you. But if I find you have betrayed me——" A look finished the sentence, which needed no other ending.

I did not flinch under his gaze. Could I but keep him there until M. le Comte laid hold of him I need care little for his threats.

He hurried away from me and was soon preparing for the attack in a manner which bespoke his skill in warfare. Four men were sent across the valley to the heights beyond to watch the road by which Fronsac and I had come, and so guard against surprise. A hundred men were massed opposite the great gate of the château, and two parties of perhaps fifty passed out of sight behind either wing. A moment later an order came to the men who were guarding me, and I was led towards the group that stood about the other prisoners.

I saw Fronsac looking towards me with joyful face, and then he stooped and whispered a few words into the ear of Mademoiselle. What they were I could only guess, but she arose from the log on which she had been sitting and turned her bright face towards me. Then, for the first time, I caught the full power of her beauty, and as I looked I did not wonder that d'Aurilly should turn traitor or Fronsac risk his life for her, since in their hearts there was no other face like that which lived in mine.

"So you still live, Marsan!" cried my friend, as the group parted to let me through. "But I am glad!" and he came towards me, holding out his hands.

My heart warmed to him anew as I hastened forward to grasp them, but one of the guards stepped in between.

"No talking!" he said gruffly. "It is M. le Duc's order."

I felt my cheek crimson at his insolence, and for an instant my hands itched to be at his throat, but I caught Fronsac's eyes fixed on me warningly, and realized that no good could come of violence. So we sat down with Roquefort's man between us and watched the attack on the château with feelings I need not describe.

Events had gone forward there even in the few minutes my attention had been drawn away. The force at the main gate had armed themselves with a great log, and even as we turned towards them a pistol-shot gave the signal which put it in motion. At the same instant a great uproar arose behind the château, proving that the attack had begun there also. The men with the log moved slowly at first, but faster and faster as they gathered momentum. As they neared the gate a dozen muskets were fired from the battlement, and some few of Roquefort's men fell, but the forward rush did not pause nor waver. Plainly the garrison of the château was too small to make effective resistance, and my heart fell within me. What if I had done wrong in keeping Roquefort here? What if M. le Comte should, after all, arrive too late? You can guess the agony of the thought!

On and on swept the rush, and the log was hurled against the gate with a tremendous crash. In a moment it was caught up again like a wisp of straw, borne backward, and hurled forward. I saw a group of the assailants linger at the gate, then suddenly scurry away from it. There came a flash of flame, a roar, and a great cloud of smoke whirled skyward.

"A petard!" cried Fronsac. "They have fired a petard!"

As the smoke passed, we saw that one of the gates had been blown inward, but the other still hung by its bars. With a cheer, the assailants rushed forward. It was over then! I had lost M. le Comte his wife and his château! Now, indeed, would he have cause to hate me!

But of a sudden the four sentries burst out of the wood at the hill-crest like men possessed and scoured down into the valley. I saw Roquefort exchange a hurried word with them, give a quick order, then spur towards us, and as he neared us I marked how rage distorted his face and made it hideous.

"Bring up a dozen horses—the freshest!" he cried to the guard, and as the men hastened away he turned to me. "Monsieur," he said in a voice that chilled me, "I warned you of your fate should you betray me, but it seems you did not heed the warning. You counted, perhaps, on a rescue. But you will never see Cadillac again,—oh, how I shall pay you for this!"

His eyes were glaring into mine, bloodshot, venomous, and I confess that at the bottom of my soul I feared him. Yet still I managed to achieve a smile.

"We shall see, M. le Duc," I said.

He seemed choked with rage and answered only by an angry gesture of the arm which hastened up the horses. In a moment Fronsac and I were bound to two of them and Mademoiselle strapped to a pillion behind a brawny soldier. I was hot with rage at the roughness with which they treated her, and I saw Fronsac straining at his bonds, his

face livid. But in a breath we were off, the three of us with our little escort, at first under the trees along the river, then up the slope beyond. As we reached the crest, I looked back and saw Roquefort marshalling his forces at the edge of the wood to cover our retreat, and beyond, along the road, I fancied I caught a glimpse of M. le Comte's troops, but we were deep among the trees again before I could make sure.

Down the hill we went at a pace which, tied to the saddle as I was, seemed doubly foolhardy. Plainly our escort had their orders, and feared death less than the displeasure of their master. Evening was at hand, and under the great trees it was soon so dark that the man before me, leading my horse, seemed but a shadow. Yet they appeared well acquainted with the ground, and there was not a moment's slackening of our speed.

At last we emerged from the forest into a rough road, and for a moment the brightness seemed almost that of noonday, so great was the contrast with the gloom of the woods. A wide and fertile plain lay before us, and away to the south I could see a range of mountains faintly outlined against the sky, and I knew they were the Pyrenees.

The road led us eastward along a river, which I guessed was the Saye. But though the land seemed fertile and promising, there were few houses—only a narrow peasant's hut here and there, more squalid than any I had ever seen in our good Marsan country. So when, presently, there appeared ahead, standing just at the edge of the road, a building of more than usual size, I looked at it with no little interest. As we neared it I saw standing before the door two horses with women's equipage, and of a sudden the leader of our troop put his fingers to his mouth and blew a shrill blast.

Almost on the instant the door opened and two women came out, attended by a little, fat man, evidently the keeper of the house. They stood looking at us for a moment, then turned to mount their horses. There seemed something strangely familiar about one of the figures. As she stood, I could not see her face, for she wore a hood pulled over her head and a cloak wrapped about her to protect her from the cold—then, with a start, I recognized the cloak. It was mine—the one I had dropped in the hallway of the house in the Rue Gogard. And with fast-beating heart I knew that it was Claire who wore it!

Some exclamation must have escaped me, for the fellow at my right asked me roughly what ailed me. I did not answer, and we rode on in silence. In a moment we had pulled up before the house, and our leader rode ahead to exchange a word with the women. Then he came back again and ordered forward the horse on which Mademoiselle was mounted. She was unstrapped and assisted to alight, then led into the inn, doubtless for refreshment.

But I was not thinking of her, I was watching Claire—the poise of

her figure, her superb grace in the saddle. Slowly she reined her horse around until she faced us, and I saw her examining the members of the troop. With feverish lips I watched her eyes as they went from face to face—and in a moment I was looking straight into them, with blood bounding to my temples.

For a breath she held me so, then turned her eyes away, slowly, indifferently, without a sign that she had known me!

And of a sudden I found myself shivering with cold, and remembered, for the first time that afternoon, that my clothing was still dripping with the water of the river.

VII.

A VISION IN THE NIGHT

DIMLY I saw Mademoiselle come out again into the road and mount a horse that had been provided for her. Fronsac and I were unbound, though not entrusted with our horses' bridles, and we set forward at a more leisurely pace than had marked the first stage of the journey. Plainly there was no longer immediate fear of pursuit, and our guard relaxed somewhat, breaking now and again into a snatch of song or shouting a rude joke back and forth. I saw that our retreat was being made on some well-matured plan, and my heart sank as I realized how remote was chance of rescue.

The man at my right, who seemed to regard me with some small trace of kindness, perceiving my blue nose and chattering teeth, gave me his cloak, and this wrapped around me rendered the journey somewhat less of torture. But nothing could drive away the chill which had settled about my heart when I had looked into Claire's eyes and caught no answering gleam of friendship and interest in them. I did not see her again, for she kept to the rear of the column with the other women, and I held my face turned resolutely to the front, for even a cadet of Gascony has his pride.

Night found us near Aurignac, as I gathered from the talk of my guards, for the country was quite unknown to me, but we left the village far on the left and pressed on through the darkness for an hour longer. It seemed to me, from the uneven nature of the ground, that we must have left the road, and I was about to ask whither we were bound when the command came to halt.

I could distinguish absolutely nothing in the darkness, but my guards appeared to know the place well, and one of them, dismounting, led my horse slowly forward across what seemed to be a bridge. I caught a gleam of light ahead, and in a moment we turned a corner and I could see something of my surroundings.

We were in the inner bailey of a castle, once of no little strength, but fallen quite into decay, for the curtains were cracked and ragged

and broken, and two of the corner towers had toppled over. The donjon loomed up into the darkness at one end, and alone seemed to have defied the hand of time and the despoiler.

Towards this we rode, and at the door my captors leaped from the saddle and helped me to dismount. I should have fallen had they not supported me, for my joints had lost the power of motion, but they led me to a corner where a fire had just been started, and set me with my back against the wall.

In a moment I saw them leading Fronsac in, and they set him down opposite me, one of the men taking the precaution to stand guard between. Presently the women passed, and I saw Mademoiselle smile at my companion—a smile which brought the glad blood to his cheek and in which there was life and hope. The others did not even glance in our direction, though I watched them till they had disappeared into an inner room.

But a woman's coldness could not rob me of the grateful warmth of the fire. How good it felt! My clothing was soon steaming in the heat, and I struggled to my feet and turned slowly about before the blaze in order to dry myself more thoroughly. I felt better with every minute, save for a great and growing emptiness within, for I had eaten nothing since my hasty breakfast with Fronsac at Montauban.

It was perhaps half an hour before one of the men came back to us and ordered us to follow him. He led the way to the right through a doorway into a lofty room, which, shattered and time-stained as it was, retained still some traces of its former beauty. At one end was the great fireplace, and in this a fire had been kindled and two men were busily engaged preparing food. A lamb had been bought or stolen somewhere, stripped deftly of its hide, dismembered, and set to roast before the fire, and most savory and inviting did it smell. A pile of bread, nearer black than white, was heaped upon a table, and to this we were led and told to take what we wanted. A dripping piece of meat was added, and we sat down again in our warm corners to enjoy it. Even now it makes my mouth run to think of that meal and how good it tasted.

I could see that Fronsac relished it too, though the blood in his cheek may have come from happiness. The guard still watched between us to prevent our talking, while the others sat before the fire, crunching their bread and meat. A sorry-looking lot they were, gathered, doubtless, from the banditti who infested the mountains—Spaniards most of them, swarthy and dirty, with countenances where one might search in vain for a trace of kindness. Yet sitting there I caught a glimpse of the joy they got from life—a hard day's march or stirring fight, and then, after it, a snug seat close before a good fire, with bread and meat, and, oh! such hunger to relish it!

The women I saw nothing of, and I thanked fortune that they had a place apart in which to pass the night. But it was evidently here that we were to sleep, for some of the men had already rolled themselves in their cloaks and lay down against the wall, a saddle for a pillow, prepared to spend the night with what comfort they could. Not one of them, except the guard between us, seemed to give us the slightest thought, and for the first time since I had awakened with the water of the river in my ears the thought of escape came to me. With only one man to deal with, it would not be a difficult thing, provided he could be silenced without awaking any of the others. At least, it was worth thinking over. I got slowly to my feet, stretched my arms, and yawned. Then I took a step towards the door, but the sentry stopped me.

"You will remain here, Monsieur," he said.

"But I am weary," I protested. "Where am I to spend the night?"

He grinned and pointed back at the corner.

"You will spend it there," he said. "But here comes Drouet, whose business it is to look after you."

As he spoke the fellow who had ridden at my right all evening entered, and with him another whom I remembered having seen with Fronsac. They came direct to us, spread their cloaks near the fire, and Drouet motioned me to seat myself on his.

"As I am responsible for your continuance with us, Monsieur," he said, sitting down beside me, "we must take a few precautions."

"Very well," I said. "Do whatever you think needful."

Without more words he produced some pieces of rope. With one of these he bound my right ankle to his left one, and then the guard came forward and bound our wrists together.

"I think that will do," he said. "I advise you not to endeavor to get them loose, Monsieur, for I sleep lightly. Besides, M. le Duc cautioned me not to hesitate to kill you should you attempt escape."

"I shall attempt to do nothing but go to sleep," I answered, yawning, and we lay down together.

I saw that Fronsac watched all this keenly, and I knew that he too was thinking of flight. His guard sat down beside him, as mine had done.

"There are two courses open to you, Monsieur," he said. "Either give me your word of honor not to attempt to get away, or submit to the programme that has been carried out with your friend yonder. I must tie your hands and feet."

"But," Fronsac protested, "they have not tied the hands and feet of my friend."

The fellow stepped over and looked down to see how I was secured.

"No," he said, "but I am not a light sleeper, like Drouet there. I can't afford to take that chance. Come, Monsieur, choose."

For answer Fronsac held out his hands, and in a moment they were lashed together. Another rope was bound tightly about his ankles.

"There," grunted the fellow, as he secured the last knot. "Now, Monsieur, you may try to leave us if you wish. Only I warn you there are some sentries about who will not hesitate to fire," and rolling himself in his cloak, he was snoring in a moment.

Despite my fatigue, sleep did not come readily to my eyes. My brain was busy with thoughts of escape. I realized that once within Roquefort's stronghold at Marleon I should not find it easy to come out again, and I had no desire for that introduction to the rack which he had promised me. But to escape was no easy thing. I lay for long trying to devise some plan which offered at least a prospect of success. I might reach out with my free hand, grasp Drouet by the throat, and hold him so until he ceased to breathe. But I realized that, with one hand, it was most unlikely I could master so powerful a man, to say nothing of the noise such an encounter must create. A sudden blow was impossible for like reason. I tried softly to remove my hand from the knot which held it, but found that, too, impossible. I tried to reach the knot with my free hand, but Drouet stirred uneasily, and I lay still again. By the fading light of the fire I could dimly see Fronsac struggling to free himself, but with no more success than I. A sentry's step sounded at the door and a shadowy figure appeared there for a moment, looking over the room to see that all was well. Then he disappeared into the outer darkness, and for a time I watched the shadows dancing along the walls and over the ceiling. Gradually they grew faint and fainter, and fatigue weighed down my eyelids.

How long I slept I do not know, but I opened my eyes with a start and looked about the room. The fire had burned so low on the hearth that the place was almost in utter darkness, save for an instant, now and then, as a log fell asunder and sent a shower of sparks into the air. It was during one of these flashes that I fancied I saw a figure moving far down the room, but the light died away before I could make sure. I rubbed my eyes, braced my head against the wall, and waited. Yes, there it was again—this time there could be no mistaking—a cloaked figure bending over one man and then passing on to the next. What could it mean?

The light died out again, but in a moment I saw the figure once more, this time much nearer, and coming slowly down the line of sleeping men towards the corner where I lay. Nearer and nearer it came, until I felt a pair of eyes looking down into mine.

"M. de Marsan," breathed a voice, "you are awake? Close your eyes to show that you hear me."

I closed my eyes an instant, the blood rushing to my temples, my nerves a-quiver. I could not mistake that voice—no, not even its whisper!

"Can you get up?" asked the voice.

I shook my head and pointed with my free hand to my bound wrist and ankle.

In an instant the figure had dropped to its knees beside me. I felt swift fingers lightly examining the ropes, I caught the gleam of a knife, and my bonds fell from me.

"Now, follow me, Monsieur," whispered the voice.

For the moment I forgot everything but the joy of being with her—the joy of holding her hand again and whispering in her ear. I got cautiously to my knees, to my feet, and stole down the room after her. A shower of ashes threw the place into sudden light and sent my heart into my throat, but none of the sleepers stirred. She paused in the shadow of the farthest corner until I had reached her side.

"There, M. de Marsan," she whispered, "is a door through which, I think, you may escape. You see I am not ungrateful."

"Ungrateful!" I repeated, and caught her hand.

"You must go, Monsieur," she protested. "Even a moment may mean recapture."

"But I am going to risk that moment, Mademoiselle," I said. "You see that my words have proved true and that we have met again; only, this afternoon, I thought you had forgot me."

"Oh, no, M. de Marsan," she breathed, "I had not forgot you, nor am I like to do so. Only I knew I could not help you did anyone suspect me for your friend. But you must go—hasten!"

"And you?" I asked.

"Oh, I—I will return to the apartment where my maid and Mademoiselle de Cadillac are sleeping," and she made a little motion towards another door, almost hidden in the shadow.

There was a step at the door, and we saw the sentry enter and pause to glance about the room. For an instant I was certain he had seen us, so intently did he look towards the corner where we were, but at last he passed on again.

I felt that the hand I held in mine was trembling.

"You see the folly of delay, Monsieur," she panted. "You must go,—they must not retake you,—better to die fighting than to wait for death at Marleon! Ah, you do not know!" and she drew her hand from mine and pressed it for a moment to her eyes. How fair, how sweet she was! How I trembled to take her in my arms! "Adieu, Monsieur. My prayers go with you."

"And only your prayers, Mademoiselle?" I whispered, my heart on fire.

"Go, go!" she repeated, and held out her hand.

I caught it in both of mine and pressed it to my lips.

"Again I say, Mademoiselle, that this is not the last time," and I held tightly to the hand, which she would have drawn away. "I understand nothing of how you came to be awaiting us at the inn back yonder, but I know that it is fate which has thrown us together twice already. The third time we shall not part so quickly."

And again she shook her head as she had in the Rue Gogard.

"I have not your confidence in fate, Monsieur," she said. "Believe me, you must go. If you will not consider your own peril, think of mine."

True, I was a fool to have forgot it.

"Pardon," I said. "Forgive me for thinking only of myself."

I pressed my lips again to her soft, warm palm, and, not trusting myself to look at her, turned towards the door she had pointed out to me.

And then, in an instant, I remembered! I had not myself alone to consider—there were Mademoiselle and Fronsac who must be freed also! I could not leave them in this den of wolves—what a coward they would think me!

I turned back. None of the sleepers had stirred, nor seemed like to stir. Claire had disappeared into the inner room. I groped my way slowly across the floor. I could see Fronsac sitting against the wall. How his eyes brightened at sight of me coming back! He held his bound wrists towards me eagerly.

"I thought you gone," he whispered. "I was a fool! I might have known you would come back!"

His eyes were dark and moist with emotion—his voice trembled. What a thing it is to have a friend!

And then, of a sudden, there came the beat of horses' hoofs without, a sharp challenge; Drouet, awakened, rubbed his eyes sleepily, saw the severed cords, and leaped to his feet with a yell. I tried to rise to meet him, but he saw me on the instant, and with a bound like a panther's was upon me.

VIII.

MARLEON!

ONE man I might play even with, but not with the half dozen who sprang to Drouet's assistance, and at the end of a moment, seeing resistance useless, I lay still, cursing my ill-fortune. The struggle had awakened all the men, and they crowded about us, asking many questions.

"What is this?" cried a loud voice from the door. "Fighting among yourselves? God! But some head shall suffer!"

I recognized the voice and got slowly to my feet, as Roquefort strode

into the light cast by the fire. I looked at him in amazement, for his eyes were bloodshot, his face haggard, his clothing stained with mud. Plainly, M. le Comte had given him a warm argument, and he had been hard put to it to escape.

"It was no quarrel, M. le Duc," explained Drouet, "nothing but this fellow trying to escape."

"To escape!" cried Roquefort. "Do you tell me that you left a door for his escape, Drouet? You value that neck of yours but lightly, then!"

"I bound him to me hand and foot, Monsieur," said Drouet humbly. "You know I am not a heavy sleeper. How he got loose without awakening me I cannot imagine."

He went to the spot where we had lain and picked up the pieces of rope. A sharp cry escaped him as he looked at them.

"Well?" asked Roquefort angrily. "What new surprise?"

"See, Monsieur," cried Drouet, holding out the rope-ends. "He did not get loose of himself. Someone came, cut the ropes, and freed him."

For a moment Roquefort gazed at the ropes without speaking, but his face, when he raised it to mine, was terrible.

"A traitor!" he said. "A traitor here!" and he looked about him with eyes that sent a shiver through his men. "Oh, but someone shall pay for this! You shall tell us, Monsieur, who it was that cut your bonds and then you will have a companion on the rack. What a death! I could find it in my heart to pity you, Monsieur, if I did not hate you so!"

He stood yet a moment looking at me, then turned away, and I heard a murmur from the crowd at the door.

"To horse!" he cried. "Bind these two rogues to the saddle! Bring forth the women!"

In an instant all was confusion. Drouet and another led me away, out into the black court, through a crowd of sweating horses and cursing men-at-arms, to the place where our mounts were stabled. Again I was seated in the saddle, and a rope passed from ankle to ankle beneath the horse's belly. Drouet laughed savagely when it was ended.

"There, my brave," he said, "I'll warrant you'll stay with us yet a little longer."

I had not the heart to retort, but sat silent while the troop fell into line again. I strained my eyes through the darkness for a glimpse of Fronsac or the women, but saw no sign of either. At last came the word to march, and we set off slowly through the night. No road, this time, but what seemed rough hill-land, so slowly did we pick our way. Drouet was in a savage mood, reflecting, doubtless, that had I escaped

he must have suffered for it, and did what he could to make my position irksome by leading my mount over the roughest places and pricking him suddenly from time to time.

Dawn found us in a narrow valley with a little brook singing through. Far ahead I could see the peaks of the Pyrenees, nearer than the day before, but still leagues away. In the midst of a little grove of trees the word came to dismount, and the men swung themselves wearily from the saddle. It was easy to see that they had been hard pressed. Their horses were almost done; yes, and the stains upon their clothing were not wholly those of the road, for some carried their arms in slings, some had their heads bandaged, some clung to the saddle with convulsive fingers, their lips blue, their eyes set with suffering. So there had been a battle, and M. le Comte had won! I remembered his concern to keep his horses fresh and looked back over the way we had come in the wild hope that I might see him in pursuit, but I saw only the bleak hillsides, the barren rocks, the strip of woodland.

Yet Roquefort shared the same concern, for he stationed sentries on the neighboring hilltops and gave his men but a brief half-hour to prepare their meal and wind their horses. And here I caught a glimpse of the agony of a soldier's life—the wounded men groaning and cursing, the white fear of death upon them, their lips trembling in self-pity, receiving but scant attention, for the others were dead-weary from their long ride. One poor fellow came suddenly to the end, and was carried aside with little ceremony and a few rocks piled upon him. These scoundrels looked too often in the face of death to fear it until it came home to each one separately.

The half hour passed and we set forward again, only this time, in the light, I saw that Roquefort rode at the column's head with another man at his side. My eyes dwelt upon him idly and I wondered who this newcomer could be. He sat his horse well and was richly dressed—so richly that he seemed out of place in this bedraggled, road-stained mob. They were deep in talk, and at one moment Roquefort pointed away to the west. His companion turned his head to follow the gesture, and I caught his profile—there was no mistaking that arched nose, that low forehead, that cruel mouth—it was d'Aurilly!

I clutched my saddle to hold my seat, my emotion shook me so. Then he was the traitor, after all! And the plot, of which I had caught but a glimpse, lay before me like an open book. D'Aurilly was to have Mademoiselle; Fronsac could eat his heart out if he chose, or swallow his chagrin, if his gullet were big enough; with Mademoiselle for hostage, M. le Comte could be brought to terms; and as for me——

I would not think of it! Here was I still alive and with my wits to help me. Even at the worst there should be no tearing to pieces, no

death by inches. I would find an easier way than that. Yet I deny that for an instant I found it in my heart to regret the fields of Marsan, to regret that I had not been content to remain quietly and leave these great men to find other pawns to sacrifice. After all, this was life, this was living, and only the night before I looked into a pair of eyes and fancied I saw love there. Was not worth something?

What need to tell more of the journey? Day and night we pressed on, until our horses stumbled under us, over hill, through valley, finding the roads, seeking hidden ways, where M. le Comte would not have followed. And always my guard was about me, until at last I perceived to see that Roquefort was taking no chance of losing me—no chance of missing his vengeance. The women were kept to the rear column; Fronsac I seldom saw; d'Aurilly passed me by with a smiling smile that turned me hot for murder. Well that I was young and strong, with a boy's hopeful heart, else had despair weighed me down.

'Tis true, Drouet relaxed a little as we journeyed forward and changed a word with me now and then, pointing out the features of the country through which we rode or telling some little story of his numberless campaigns with Roquefort. Gruesome stories they were, most of them, of murder, outrage, robbery, for Roquefort's men were not troubled by nice consciences and took, without questioning, what came to their nets. Nor did their leader concern himself with them, so they went willingly on his business and fought his battles for him.

At noon of the third day we came to Marleon.

"You were asking about the castle," said Drouet suddenly. "I will hold it."

I looked with all my eyes, but saw only the tumbled roofs of a little town.

"You look too low," he said. "Higher, on the cliff behind the town."

Then I descried it, and my heart grew cold as I looked at it. Two hundred feet or more the cliff sprang upward, straight as a battle wall and near as smooth—so smooth that no tree or shrub caught hold on it. And just at the summit stood the castle, frowning upon the village like some tireless, merciless watch-dog.

"But to get to it," I ventured, after a moment. "It seems to have been built only for the birds."

"You will see," and Drouet laughed meaningly. "I advise you to look well at the way, Monsieur; you may never have occasion to look at it a second time."

I rode on without replying. What good to bandy words with a scoundrel? But as we drew nearer to the place my heart fell more and more. It might defy a king's army.

The road turned abruptly to the right of the town, and then in again behind a little spur of the mountain. Here the ascent began, and the way at once became so narrow that two horses could not go abreast. On either hand towered the crags, whence a dozen ambushed men might easily pick off a thousand. In and out the path wound and ever upward, until, at last, it stopped before a great gate, barred heavily with iron. I saw how adroitly the path was fashioned, so that not more than two men at a time could approach the gate. A horn sounded, our force was evidently scrutinized with care from within, and then the gate creaked back upon its hinges. In a moment we were in the court, and the word was given to dismount.

"Follow me, Monsieur," said Drouet, without giving me a moment to look about me or to exchange a glance with my friends. "We have an apartment awaiting you."

"I followed him silently, but my heart cleared somewhat when I saw him begin to mount a narrow stair. I had feared that I was to be buried in some dungeon underground,—anything were better than that,—to be shut away from the pure air and bright sunshine! So it was even with a certain cheerfulness that I went up the stair behind him. Up, up we went steadily, until at last I saw we had reached the stairhead. Drouet paused before a little door secured by a dozen bolts sunk deep into the masonry. He threw them back slowly, one by one, that I might contemplate their strength, then pulled the door open.

"Enter," he said, and I stooped and stepped within.

He stood looking after me a moment, then swung the door shut, and I heard him throwing the bolts into place with the same malicious deliberation. Then all was still.

I was in the topmost chamber of the tower looking towards the east—over the town and out across the plain. It was a little room, with walls of great stones there could be no removing, but there was a small window, too narrow, indeed, to permit the passage of my body, and barred with heavy iron, yet wide enough to admit a breath of fresh air and a stream of sunshine. I went to it and stood looking far out across the valley. The fields, the houses, the strip of woods along a little river were cameoed by the bright sunshine and the clear, pure air of the south. But my thoughts were heavy ones, and kept my eyes from perceiving the full beauty of the scene.

As I stood looking so, my eyes caught the movement of a body of men along a road afar off. I watched them listlessly at first, thinking them some body of peasants en route to a market or merrymaking, but as they drew nearer I saw that they were mounted, and then the sunlight was caught on glittering armor, on burnished hilts and gleaming spear-points. It was a troop of men armed cap-à-pie—and my heart leaped at the sudden thought that this might be M. le Comte himself—too late by an hour!

Breathlessly I watched them as they drew nearer—I could see they numbered some three hundred, that they were well mounted well accoutred. Some of the people of Marleon came out to look at them, and then, after a glance, went hastily in again, closing the door behind them. I could see them running through the streets, and a murmur of many voices floated upward to me, confused and indistinct. Plainly there was something about this troop of horse which caused the people of the town much uneasiness.

The troop came on slowly and with a certain impressiveness. When they reached the city wall they stopped, and then there came mounting to the ears a trumpet's clear note of defiance. A pennant was thrown upon the breeze,—it hung a moment limp, then the wind caught its folds and stretched it so that all might see—azure; on a bend of gold a laurel-tree sinople,—the arms of Cadillac!

IX.

THE DEN OF THE WOLF

How my heart leaped as I saw that blazon! And then, in an instant, it fell again, for what could three hundred men,—yea, three thousand men,—be they brave as Bayard, hope to accomplish against this castle in the air? Roquefort might sit on the battlements and laugh at them. True, they might starve him out in the course of months, if their patience could last so long, but ere that Roquefort would have had his will of me and d'Aurilly of Mademoiselle Valentin. Had they been but an hour earlier!

So I watched them with gloomy face as they drew away from the city walls and pitched their camp a little distance down the valley, at the crest of a small hill. Evening was at hand, and the shadows, deepening first at the foot of the valley, stole silently up the hillsides until all the world below me was wrapped in darkness. Through my window I could see a broad strip of sky, with a galaxy of stars twinkling brightly in it, and I knew that the night was a fair, sweet, clear one. If Claire and I might wander through it with only the stars for company!

Soon the fires of the camp gleamed out, first one and then another, and finally many of them. To right and left of the camp beacons were lighted to guard against surprise, and I knew that M. le Comte was preparing for any fortune. In the town too a light shone here and there, and the murmur which floated up from the streets proved that the town-people had not yet done with discussing the advent of this enemy.

A noise at the door brought me from the window. I heard the door thrown back, the door opened, and Drouet appeared on the threshold bearing a flickering lantern in one hand and a plate of bread

meat and can of water in the other. These he set upon the floor, and with a not unfriendly gesture motioned me to them. In faith, I was hungry enough, and needed no second bidding! Drouet placed his lantern on the floor and sat down opposite me. For a time he watched me in silence, as though enjoying the sight of my hunger, but I knew that he could not keep silence long, for I had already proved his love of gossip.

"I dare say you saw that little show down yonder," he remarked at last. "Cadillac would better have remained at home. Here he can only starve. He will find scant forage in these hills."

"You do not know M. le Comte," I retorted with a confidence I confess I did not feel. "He will smoke you out of this hole yet, and then 'twill be time to say your prayers. Possibly you have already felt his hand and so know its weight."

Drouet smiled somewhat ruefully.

"Possibly," he admitted; "yet if he venture to assault this place, he nor his men will ever see Cadillac again."

At the bottom of my heart I believed him, but I held my smile.

"Yet he has his points," he continued after a moment. "He sent a warning to M. le Duc just now, threatening I know not what if the girl and you two youngsters were not surrendered unharmed forthwith. You should have seen M. le Duc's face! He sent back a warm message too. 'Tell your master,' he said to the envoy, 'I propose to change Mademoiselle de Cadillac into Madame d'Aurilly. We will then make such treaty as we see fit to prevent d'Aurilly wearying of his wife. This spy from Marsan is going to bawl his life out on the rack. As for the other, I have not yet decided.' And the envoy went away to deliver this pretty news. One can imagine how Cadillac will receive it! How those two hate each other! France is not wide enough to hold them both."

"And when is this marriage to take place?" I asked, affecting to pass over that portion of the message which concerned myself, though it struck me to the heart.

"Soon," and Drouet winked. "You see, M. d'Aurilly is hungering to possess this pretty piece of womanhood—it seems he is even in love with her! To-morrow, perhaps, or next day. M. le Duc is a man who never delays, and he has a priest here who is most obliging."

"The King," I cried, "will have something to say to that! There are rumors of strange plots which affect your master. He may go too far!"

But Drouet only laughed.

"Paris is a long way off," he said, "and the King has much that concerns him nearer home. Besides, this castle could set at naught even a King's army, should any be brought against it, which is most

unlikely. But in all this rush of events do not despair—you will not be forgotten. M. le Duc himself will wish to see you ere long," and chuckled to himself as he picked up his lantern and moved towards the door.

For an instant I burned to spring upon him, to pull him down, to kill him with his own poniard. But there was doubtless a sentry in the corridor, who could bring me down with a single musket shot—not yet—not yet—and I let him pass. I must first find a plan—a plan. Come, what were my wits for?

I lay down on my pallet in one corner to think it over. But what a problem! To escape from this stronghold in the air, with only one bare hands to aid! It was too much for even a Marsan's cunning!

A musket-shot far down the hill brought me out of my thoughts and to my feet. It was followed by another and another, and as I rushed to my window I fancied I could hear a chorus of yells, as men fighting hand to hand. The cries rose and fell and died away, then a tremendous explosion shook the earth. Far below me I saw a great spurt of flame shoot upward, and I knew that M. le Comte was blowing in the gates of Marleon. At least, he could make himself master of the town. There was for a few moments a renewal of the fighting, and then all was still again.

I thought the attack over, and was just turning to rest when there came another burst of firing from behind the hill—M. le Comte was trying to force the castle! The firing waxed and waned and died away. I listened in vain for any further outcry. Plainly, he had been repulsed, and seeing how desperate the road was, had not ventured a second assault. Would he ever venture it, I wondered! He loved his daughter to be sure, yet would it not be the purest folly to dash himself to pieces against this rock in the attempt to rescue her? What could he hope to accomplish? And whenever Roquefort scented danger, could he not threaten reprisals on Mademoiselle herself? Better to draw off to leave Mademoiselle to such fate as Roquefort had prepared for her, and wait another day, when, by some ruse or sudden ambuscade, Roquefort and d'Aurilly might be made to pay drop for drop!

Weighted with such bitter thoughts, I lay down again upon my pallet and this time dropped asleep. Nor did I waken till someone shook me roughly, and I opened my eyes to see Drouet standing above me and full day peering in at the window.

"God's blood!" he cried, "but you sleep soundly! Here, get up and eat. You will need your strength this day!"

I got to my feet and looked at him.

"And why?" I asked as carelessly as I could, for there was a meaning in his words that chilled me.

"Because you are to have a little interview with Mother Brodquin and others of her family."

"Mother Brodequin?" I repeated.

"Yes," and he bent over towards one foot and made a gesture as of tightening a screw. "You understand? It is our pet name for her. She is not lovely to look at, but she has a tight embrace."

I understood, and I found my appetite for the food suddenly vanished. I protest I am no coward—but the boot—the rack—I knew not what horrors—lay before me. 'Twas enough to chill the courage of any man. Still, I made pretence of eating that Drouet might not see my terror.

"I heard some shots last night," I said at last. "Was there an attack?"

"Hardly that," he laughed. "Cadillac tried to crawl up the road, but two or three shots sent him headlong down again. He will not try it a second time unless he is madder than I think him."

"But he gained the town," I said.

"The town, yes. But the town is nothing. M. le Duc never deigns to assist in its defence; its walls are down in a dozen places. That was no victory. He will never take the castle."

I quite agreed, but held my tongue.

"M. le Duc holds the upper hand," he added exultantly. "How he will squeeze Cadillac dry ere he is done with him! But there, I must go. Somehow when I am with you I run to gossip. But then you will talk so little in this world!"

"When is this interview to take place?" I asked.

"Soon," and he laughed. "There are certain preparations to be made, but they will not take long," and, still laughing, he was gone.

I gazed about the cell helplessly. Was there no way out? Must I fall victim to this monster of a Roquefort? To fall in fair fight, in warm blood, in the open day, were nothing—a man could go to death then gladly. But slowly, in a dark cellar, with others looking on exulting—ugh! I felt my nerves quivering at the horror of the thought—and then, with set teeth, I put the weakness from me. Other men—yes, and women—had gone to the same fate with smiling lips—why not I, a Marsan?

So when Drouet opened the door again he found me looking from my window down upon M. le Comte's camp, and I flatter myself that he was surprised at the calmness of my greeting.

"You will follow me, Monsieur," he said in a tone somewhat repressed. Perhaps even he was beginning to pity me.

"Willingly," I answered, and after him I went, out into the hall, where two sentries fell in behind me, down the stair, across a gloomy interior court to a great stone tower standing somewhat detached, then down another stair. I felt my head grow giddy as we left behind us the good air and the bright sunshine—perhaps I was nevermore to

see them, or to see them only from a racked and crooked body. again I caught my manhood back to me and went on down the stair a step tolerably firm.

A torch was blazing at the foot, lighting partially a dismal passage which seemed to lead into the very bowels of the earth. Down Drouet turned, and paused, at last, before a door.

"This is the place," he said in a low tone. "Enter," and he opened the door and stood aside.

I noted how thick it was, how heavy—plainly no cry, however soft and agonized, could pierce it. For an instant the thought came to me to hurl myself upon my guards, to tear them by the throat until they should be forced to kill me—that would be the easier way. Yet the heart of youth!—perhaps beyond the door there were not certain death—there might yet be a chance—and life was sweet!

So I stepped across the threshold and heard the door swing behind me.

X.

THE QUESTION

Two torches blazing from brackets in the wall at the farther end threw fantastic shadows along the floor and up against the ceiling. For an instant, as I looked at them, my eyes were dazzled, and then I saw that on a platform below the lights sat Roquefort and by his side d'Aurilly. A dozen men-at-arms stood guard, with something sinister and threatening in their very immobility, and in the corner to one side I caught a glimpse of an array of great, shapeless things, whose nature I did not permit my thoughts to dwell upon.

"This way, sirrah!" called Roquefort, and then sat silent under the torchlight stood before him, the torchlight full upon my face. It was then I understood why the torches were so placed—the face of the judge in shadow—the face of the prisoner in full light. How many had I seen so and felt those eyes probing deep into their souls! For even in the shadow I could catch the gleam of those serpent's eyes.

"Well, M. de Marsan," he began at last, "it seems that Cassegrain could not save you after all, despite your lying."

"Not yet, Monsieur," I answered, still with some show of confidence.

"Not yet!" he cried. "Body of God! Think you there is yet a chance? Three shots, last night, drove him headlong back into the plain. Why, Monsieur, he would be too late were he thundering at the gate this instant! The time is too short!"

I saw d'Aurilly leering at me, all his malicious joy in his face, and the sight fired my blood.

"At least," I said, "I shall die an honest man, and neither a traitor nor an abductor of women!"

D'Aurilly started from his seat with an oath, and in an instant I should have had my fingers at his throat, but that Roquefort held him back.

"No, no," he laughed. "Restrain yourself, d'Aurilly. That were too swift a way. One blow of a sword and it is over—but the rack is different. I wonder at you, my friend!"

"True!" muttered d'Aurilly, and sank back into his seat with livid face.

"I see you have not yet forgotten that blow of my hand across your mouth, Monsieur," I sneered, resolved to provoke him to the uttermost. Pray Heaven I might yet get my hands on this devil and have a moment in which to settle my account with him. Then could I die almost content.

His hands were trembling on the arms of his chair, but he glared at me without replying.

"Ho, what is this tale, d'Aurilly?" questioned Roquefort. "Do you tell me that this rascal struck you in the face and lived to boast of it? I thought you a man of spirit!"

"He lies!" cried d'Aurilly. "He lies! It was nothing."

I looked at him, smiling. Roquefort, I think, could tell where the truth lay, but he passed it by.

"Come, M. de Marsan," he said more sternly, "we are wasting time, and I have much to do this day. You will remember the reward I promised you should you betray me at Cadillac," and he made a little gesture towards the horrors in the corner. "Well, the reward is ready; only since then I have learned something that may perhaps alter matters. In the first place, I learned from the Vicomte d'Aurilly that you carried to your master at Montauban a message which told of my little expedition against Cadillac. This message, it seems, was brought to you at Marsan by some member of my household. In the second place, I learned from Drouet, as you know, that someone in the night had come to your aid, had cut the ropes which bound you to him, and that you were within an ace of escaping."

He paused for a moment. I could guess at what was coming.

"D'Aurilly has been good enough to represent me in Cadillac's household, not caring, at first, to trust me to secure for him that black-eyed Valérie, but preferring to rely on his own charms. Well, it appears his charms had no great effect, so, in the end, he was glad to come to me for aid," and Roquefort looked at his companion with just a spark of malice in his eyes. "It was not until he had managed to join my troop in that brush at Cadillac that I learned the truth—that we have a spy and traitor among us. I had suspected it before, when my plans had come to naught, but proof was always lacking. Well, Monsieur, I desire the name of that traitor."

On that point, at least, I could answer fully.

"M. le Duc," I said, "I do not know his name. I do not even know his appearance. I know only that one night a man rode in Marsan carrying a message which he entrusted to my father, who in turn, gave it to me. I saw the man but a moment; it was night and his face was so well concealed that I caught not a glimpse of it."

Roquefort was glaring down at me, his face working.

"Doubtless the person who cut your bonds three nights since was also invisible!" he cried. "Or did you, by any chance, see his face, M. de Marsan?"

My blood leaped back into my heart. I looked into his eyes horrified—seeing myself at the edge of a precipice.

"Well, Monsieur," said Roquefort after a moment, "I am waiting for an answer. Come, your tongue is not so ready."

The sweat broke out across my forehead as I stood there looking at him. I thought bitterly of the hopes that had sat on my saddle-bow as I rode out from Montauban—it seemed hard that they should end like this. But if Fate willed it—what then? Certainly, I had done what I could.

"M. le Duc," I answered with what calmness I could, "I have nothing more to say."

His face turned purple and his eyes became two sparks of fire, mingling the torches which blazed behind him, yet his voice was calm.

"Remember my warning, Monsieur," he said. "I am not a man who breaks his word. Either you must be stretched yonder in a moment—or this spy. I swear it! I have suffered too much from him to pass it by. There is no other way—even your Gascon wits cannot devise one."

I looked from him to d'Aurilly and back again. There was no mercy in either countenance—only d'Aurilly exulted openly. And the thought came to me that I might yet save Mademoiselle from the fate threatened her and win for myself an easy death. There was no time to hesitate.

Perhaps he saw me gather for the spring or read my thought in my eyes, for he gave a little cry and started from his chair even as my foot was on the first step of the platform. But I was on him before he could get his poniard out—my fingers clutched at his throat with the frenzied eagerness of hate—and we crashed backward over the chairs together.

I heard a confused shouting, a rush of many feet, but I saw only the working face before me, with its staring eyes, its gaping mouth, with the swollen, quivering tongue within. God! what a lust of blood was on me as I gripped his throat and crushed it! I knew he was fumbling for his dagger—I knew that in an instant a sword-thrust

from behind would end it—yet it seemed ages before they were upon me, pulling me off.

"God's blood! Pull him up!" yelled Roquefort, and they jerked me to my feet; but the other came with me too, for my fingers were set as death itself might have set them.

I felt the others pulling at them, but my teeth were set—this man was mine! They should not take him from me! But Roquefort himself strode up at last, and ran a dagger-point under my fingers, prying them back and cutting them cruelly. Only I did not then feel the hurt—my whole soul was in the gaze I bent upon d'Aurilly as he lay there before me—if only he were dead! if only he were dead! Then I might go in peace to my own death!

"Bring Briquet!" called Roquefort, "and quick about it!"

In a moment a figure entered from the dark corner.

"Here is work for you," said Roquefort, and pointed to the man on the floor.

The surgeon bent over him for a moment, felt his wrist, and looked into his eyes. Then he stood up again.

"There is work for the gravedigger, not for me, M. le Duc," he said. "You twisted the necklet a shade too tightly."

"Necklet!" repeated Roquefort, strangled by rage. "Body of God! It was no necklet—'twas yonder scoundrel's fingers!"

Briquet turned and looked at me with a little air of curiosity.

"He must have strong fingers," he observed.

But Roquefort's rage had quite mastered him.

"We shall see!" he yelled. "We shall test every muscle of him! Remain here, Briquet—I want the end deferred as long as it may be! To the rack with him!"

I strained to hurl from me the scoundrels who held me to right and left, but they were doubtless accustomed to the work, for they threw me by some trick of wrestling, and seizing me by arm, leg, thigh, and body, bore me into the shadows of the farther corner.

If ever man fought to save himself, I fought then, but I had no chance—I saw it in a moment. First one arm, then the other, was strapped down above my head, and in an instant I felt the straps drawn tight about my ankles. I strained at them till I thought my veins would burst, but they held quite firm. Then, with white fear at my heart, I lay still and waited. I could do no more!

They brought the torches and stuck them into brackets in the wall above me, where they would illumine every line of my face. Roquefort took his place at the foot, where he could look down into my eyes. Briquet stationed himself beside me and looked at me as one interested in a new experiment. Plainly his heart had been hardened by a hundred such spectacles. And yet, as I looked up at him, I fancied I saw

in his eyes a look of encouragement. Where had I seen that before? Somewhere, surely!

"Is all ready?" asked Roquefort.

The men grunted an assent.

He looked at me again, and read something in my eyes I would have had him see there.

"I think we shall yet learn the name of the spy," he sneered. "I think we shall soon have this scoundrel's soul bare before us! Turn wheel, men!"

XI.

ROQUEFORT'S PRICE

I HEARD the wheel creak around, and a sudden spasm of pain through elbows, shoulders, knees, and hips as the ropes tightened. I set my teeth to stifle back the cry I knew the next turn must wrench from me, and glanced up at Roquefort leering down at me. Thank God, I had settled accounts with that other devil! He, at least, was not there to gloat over my agony! This one I must leave to M. Comte.

"Well, M. de Marsan," he drawled, "are you yet ready to tell me the name of the spy? Think well before you answer. Your present position is not an easy one, perhaps, but it is a bed of roses compared to what it will be when that wheel has been turned twice round."

I bit my lips to keep back the curses that rose to them.

"Come, you are obdurate," said Roquefort after a moment. "Briquet, explain to him the effect of turning the wheel twice more."

"The first turn will dislocate the shoulders," said Briquet in a tone of professional indifference. "The second turn will dislocate the hips."

The voice!—where had I heard it? I stared up at him! I could have sworn there was white hate in the look he bent upon his master.

"And the third turn, Briquet?" urged Roquefort.

"The third turn will render the dislocations permanent by tearing away the gristle which binds bone to bone—ball to socket."

I felt my heart grow cold with terror. Had God a hell to fit such devils? Yet other men had borne it—day after day they had borne it and still smiled. Well, I would bear it too!

"So you will not speak?" asked Roquefort, reading my defiance in my eyes. "As you will. Only, I warn you, you are playing the fool, M. de Marsan," and he turned to give the signal to the men at the wheel.

But the signal was not given. Even as he turned, the outer door was flung back and hurrying feet dashed into the chamber and across it towards us. Everyone stared, astounded, to see who this might be that had defied Roquefort's orders. Not until they came full with

the circle of light from the torches could I see them—and how my heart leaped, for I looked up into Claire's eyes, and back of her saw Brissac's anxious face.

"We are in time," she said in a voice almost a whisper. "Thank God! Loose that wheel, you scoundrels!"

Mechanically, without thinking from whom the order came, they permitted the wheel to spin back. What a blessed relief it was!

Then she turned to Roquefort with blazing eyes.

"You are a brute—a monster!" she cried. "Oh, I did well to think twice before accepting you for a husband!"

I could not keep back the cry that burst to my lips. So that story Fronsac had told me was true! But she merely glanced at me and turned again to Roquefort, who was watching her with eyes inflamed by passion.

"It was only by the merest chance I learned a moment since what devil's work was toward here," she went on. "You will release him at once, Monsieur."

But Roquefort only laughed.

"My faith," he said, "how beautiful you are once you get in a passion! Come, Claire, you must be mine, after all! Only I can appreciate you! I am not milk and water—I can meet fire with fire!"

She looked at him with scornful eyes.

"Are you going to continue in this coward's work?" she asked.

He saw the contempt in her look and it stung him.

"Mademoiselle," he said coldly, his face growing stern, "this is something that is no concern of yours. This fellow knows of the existence of one spy, and perhaps of two, in my household. I propose to turn that wheel until their names are wrung from him."

"And this to the man who saved your honor!" she sneered. "Your gratitude is truly princely, M. le Duc!"

Roquefort stared at her, amazed.

"My honor?" he repeated. "I do not understand, Mademoiselle."

She looked at her uncle over her shoulder, and something in her eyes brought him forward. But his face was livid—plainly, he did not relish this bearding of the lion.

"Permit me to explain, M. le Duc," he said. "You will remember that I told you of the attack upon me at Montauban, which would inevitably have secured from me certain papers but for the assistance which came to me opportunely."

Roquefort nodded grimly.

"I remember," he said. "Go on."

"Well, M. le Duc, I did not tell you the name of our rescuer, not thinking that it would interest you and not knowing at the time that he was a prisoner. It was not until Claire came to me just now

and told me that I knew. Then I hastened here, that you also might know. M. le Duc, the man who saved your papers lies there before you!"

Roquefort stared at him a moment and then down on me.

"This fellow!" he stammered, as though not believing his ears.

"But he is one of Cadillac's men!"

"He saved us," said Brissac quickly, "not asking which side he served—seeing only that we were in deadly peril."

"And that the girl was pretty," added the other, glancing at Claire keenly. "I can read the story—it is an old one among you Gascons."

"At any rate, he saved us, M. le Duc," interrupted Brissac with a touch of impatience.

"Yes, he saved you, perhaps," assented Roquefort, "but he refused to answer my questions. I am grateful for the one; the other I cannot forgive. He must be made to answer."

I saw Brissac flush darkly and Claire grow pale. You may well conceive with what intentness I stared up at this scene—with what agony of earnestness I watched the face of each of the actors in it.

"What are these questions, M. le Duc?" asked Brissac at last.

"The first is—the name of the man who sent a message from here to Marsan, which this fellow carried to Montauban. He says he cannot see the messenger—at least, not his face—and that he does not know his name. But the other question cannot be evaded so easily. I want the name of the person who, three nights ago, cut the bonds which held him to Drouet."

I saw the blood sweep in a wave from Claire's face as she came slowly forward. I understood what she was about to do, and implored her with my eyes not to speak, but she did not even glance at me.

"Do you mean, M. le Duc," she asked, in a voice strained by emotion, "that if you have the name of this person you will release M. Marsan?"

Roquefort glanced at her, surprised by her emotion.

"Perhaps," he said. "I had sworn to have his life, but the story you have told me counts in his favor."

"Then, M. le Duc," she said firmly, "learn that I am the person M. de Marsan chose not to betray me, but I can betray myself."

I could feel the force with which Roquefort gripped the bottom of the rack to steady himself under the blow.

"You!" he cried. "You!" and he glared at her with bloodshot eyes. "Body of God! But this is beyond endurance! You—Claire de Brissac, whom I have honored with the offer of my hand—a traitor!"

"Not a traitor, M. le Duc," she protested proudly. "I sought merely to save the life of a man who had saved my uncle's. I am still seeking to do so. Surely I have succeeded!"

But Roquefort was looking down at me and did not answer.

"Tell me, M. de Marsan," he said at last, "is this pretty story true—this story of the rescue?"

"Quite true, M. le Duc."

"And did Cadillac know?"

"He recognized me at once, Monsieur. So did Letourge. He was in bed——"

"In bed?" queried Roquefort, surprised.

"In bed—yes. It was he whom Mademoiselle struck across the face with a white-hot iron. He will always wear the scar."

"And he did not hang you?"

"He was about to, Monsieur. Only, in the end, he determined to prove whether I or d'Aurilly were the traitor."

Roquefort looked across the room to where the traitor's body lay, a dark heap on the platform.

"Ah, yes, I had forgot," he murmured. Then he turned to Claire. "Mademoiselle," he said, "since you answer yourself, I quite absolve M. de Marsan, and out of gratitude for that exploit of his am ready to release him."

I heard Claire breathe a sigh of relief as he paused; but I saw the devil in his eyes. I knew that the end was not yet.

"Unfortunately," he went on, "there is another count against M. de Marsan—a very grave count. Look yonder, on the platform, Mademoiselle; do you see that thing lying there? An hour since that was the Vicomte d'Aurilly—now it is a mere heap of carrion. It was M. de Marsan who sprang upon him and wrought the transformation, and M. de Marsan must answer for it."

"A coward and a traitor, Monsieur," breathed the girl, "not worthy a second thought."

"A coward and a traitor, perhaps," assented Roquefort; "but, nevertheless, my guest and killed within my house."

I read the implacable purpose in his voice—so did the others, and I saw Claire steadying herself against the wall. How I loved her! And I devoured her sweet face with my eyes. It would be easy to go to death with that image in my heart!

She stood a moment so, looking down at me, her eyes dark with horror. What eyes they were! And Roquefort was looking at her too, reading her heart.

"Kindly take Mademoiselle to her apartments, Brissac," he said at last. "She will not care to witness what is to follow."

So the moment had come!

"Adieu, Mademoiselle," I said as calmly as I could. "It is to be adieu this time, it seems. You have done what you could to save me, and I shall die quite happy, knowing that you care. Only," I added,

with a smile I could not make wholly tearless, "it would have been good to live, knowing it—for I love you, Mademoiselle. Pardon my saying it here, before these others—but I want you to think of me always loving you."

Her lips were trembling and her eyes bright with tears. Good! To live—life would be worth something now!

"M. le Duc," she asked at last in a choking voice, "is there a price which will prevent this murder?"

He looked from her to me and back again. I saw hot desire in his eyes as he gazed at her—her face, her arms, the poised figure!

"Only one, Mademoiselle," he answered very quietly.

"And what is that, Monsieur?"

Again he looked at her, dwelling on her beauty, her girlishness, her innocence.

"That is yourself, Mademoiselle."

I started from the rack, but the straps held me back.

"Mademoiselle," I cried, hot with rage, "I forbid such a sacrifice of your wife to this scoundrel! His worst with me must be less hideous than that!"

But Roquefort waved me to silence.

"Understand, Mademoiselle," he said quietly, "that I make the offer of my hand only out of courtesy, because I want you to come willingly to my bed. I have a passion for you—I desire you—and I am going to have you! Heretofore, since your uncle was too weak to command you, I have urged my suit discreetly. Hereafter I shall command it with a high hand. You are, self-confessed, a traitor to me, and I can do with you as I please. I have the right over you of justice, high and low! Yet I am generous—yet still do I offer you the life of Madame la Duchesse de Roquefort, and your lover's life besides. There are few women who would need to be asked twice. Nor do I intend to ask you twice, Mademoiselle. I am weary of your interference. You will choose now whether you will be my wife willingly or——"

His glance finished the sentence. She understood—so did Brissac. White-livered coward, why did he not strike the scoundrel down where he stood? I jerked at the straps in an agony of rage. His wife or his mistress! A pretty choice!

"But, M. le Duc," began Brissac in protest.

Roquefort turned slowly and looked at him, with eyes red with malignant menace. Brissac stood silent, with twitching lips. Yes, he was a coward, as Fronsac had said.

Then Roquefort turned again to the girl.

"I await your answer, Mademoiselle," he said with an infernal calmness.

She looked about for a moment helplessly, as though seeking some way of escape. There was only one that I could see—and I cursed the straps that held me helpless there! If only God would grant it me to kill this monster!

"Mademoiselle," I began, "Claire!" and then stopped—what could I advise? Yet the thought of her in that devil's arms maddened me.

She looked at me for an instant—at the hard bed on which I lay—at the men ready at the wheel—then her eyes swept back to Roquefort.

"M. le Duc," she said quite calmly, "I accept. Only, I warn you, you will get no loving wife."

He bowed to her with infinite politeness. The scoundrel was not without his points. He could meet fire with fire, as he had said.

"All that will come after," he retorted, with an infernal smile. "I assure you that you will find me a loving husband. As to your lover—I will take care to protect myself from him!"

He looked down at me, the smile still on his lips.

"But the arrangements," he continued after a moment. "I must acquaint you with them, Mademoiselle. We were to have had a wedding to-morrow morning, only, unfortunately, the bridegroom lies dead yonder. Well, we will have the wedding, only it will be you and I who take the vows. You agree?"

Her face became more livid as she saw how near her martyrdom was, but there was no relenting in his features. She nodded faintly.

"Very well," he said approvingly, "that is right, Mademoiselle. Make the best of it. I am not such a monster as you seem to think. I am a man, like any other, and have my generous moments. I hasten to order the arrangements. As for Mademoiselle de Cadillac, I must select her another husband from among my followers. Permit me to conduct you to your room, Mademoiselle. As soon as we are safe outside, this fellow will be released and taken back to his tower. Immediately after the wedding he shall be returned to Cadillac unharmed. I swear it on my honor. Does that satisfy you?"

Again she nodded, and Roquefort paused for a moment to look down at me.

"My faith, M. de Marsan," he laughed, "you look as though you were itching to treat me as you did d'Aurilly."

"God will yet give me the chance!" I answered, between my teeth.

He laughed again and led the girl to the door, leaving me jerking convulsively at my straps.

XII.

A MESSAGE FROM WITHOUT

I LAY for some hours in my cell, dazed by this new misfortune nursing my aching muscles and smarting fingers. I had, it is true, saved Mademoiselle Valérie from the most immediate danger which threatened her, but only to hurl her into an abyss more frightful, for Requefort had said that he would soon select another man to wed her and he could hardly fail to be more vulgar than d'Aurilly, so that in the end she would fare worse than ever. For a moment I found in my heart to regret that I had killed d'Aurilly, then the memory of his great villainies came back to me and the regret passed. Everywhere were well rid of him!

After a time Drouet brought my dinner, and inquired with pretended solicitude about my injuries. I told him they were not worth speaking of, though my fingers were very sore from the dagger-cut and my muscles still ached abominably. He saw I was in no mood to talk and soon left me to myself.

I had no relish for the food, and went to the window in the faint hope that I might see some promise of assault in M. le Comte's camp below, but the hope died as I looked down at it. The force was still there, indeed, but the men were sprawled here and there in little groups and the horses were grazing along the river. He had not taken possession of the town, preferring, doubtless, to levy upon the inhabitants for supplies and leave them the possession of their houses. Besides, in the town there was danger of surprise or betrayal. Yonder on the hilltop there was none.

But I could guess how M. le Comte was eating his heart out gazing at this fortress on a cliff and wondering what had befallen his daughter. It is not an easy thing for a man who has ordered things ever as he pleased to sit down quietly and accept defeat. Yet had he ten times the men, success had been far off as ever.

I was about to turn away when I heard a little rustling on the wall outside the window, and saw that it was caused by a piece of paper dangling at the end of a string. It was jerked vigorously back and forth. In a second I understood. Someone on the parapet, just over my head, was trying to attract my attention. Plainly, the paper was meant for me. I strained my arm through the window and at last managed to grasp it. With fast-beating heart I drew it in and took it from the end of the string, which was jerked away as soon as I released it. Then I unfolded the paper and read. The note ran:

"Monsieur, I have learned of your demeanor at the question and am grateful, for I am he who brought the warning to Marsan. While it is true you do not know my

name, I am sure, nevertheless, that you might have pointed me out had you wished to do so. To-night I think I can aid you, and also the others. At six o'clock Drouet will bring you your supper. Detain him in talk until the guards are changed, which will be perhaps ten minutes. Then put him for a moment off his guard, seize his poniard, and kill him. This will require courage and address, which I am certain you possess. There is a sentry in the corridor, but you need not fear him, as I will see that he does not trouble you. In the cell below yours M. de Fronsac is quartered. Drouet will have the key to the door somewhere about him, since he delivers M. de Fronsac's supper before coming up to you. He will doubtless have also the other keys to the tower.

"At seven o'clock Mademoiselle de Cadillac will come out for her usual evening walk upon the parapet, which she is permitted to take alone. There is, however, a sentry at either end of the parapet. These you will have to silence. She will be looking for you.

"After she has joined you, descend at once to the bottom of the east tower—the one in which you are. A flight of steps runs down into the rock. Descend these. At the bottom you will find a small door, heavily barred. You will see this opens on the face of the cliff, and if you look attentively, you will discern little steps cut in the rock. By means of a rope to steady one's self, these steps may be descended. The rope is kept always lying by the door. The great difficulty will be to get the door open. Only Roquefort himself has the keys, and you will have to break it down. This will be no easy task, but the sentry's musket may prove of service. As the watches are changed at six o'clock your escape will probably not be discovered until midnight, so that you will have six hours in which to work. Much may be accomplished in that time. If you succeed, commend me to M. le Comte."

You can conceive with what joy I read this message, with its plan of escape so admirably mapped out. At first glance it seemed quite easy, but as I considered it various difficulties appeared. However, I am not one who borrows trouble, and I put these doubts behind me. For, after all, here was hope in place of black despair—hope—and then, of a sudden, I saw that it was not hope at all—at least, not for me. We might escape,—we three,—but what of Claire? Would I not be deserting her to the mercy of this monster who knew no mercy? Well, we should see. At the worst, I could seek out this devil, sword in hand, and cut him down ere he could summon aid. I could see the others safely down the cliff and then turn back upon my errand. That would mean death for me also—but if there were no other way, it would at least save Claire from the insult of his caresses.

I read the message through a second time, and found myself wondering—who was this traitor in Roquefort's household? No ordinary

man, certainly, and one who kept his secret well. I knew so little of Roquefort's followers—and I had caught but a glimpse of the senger's face. Well, M. le Comte would reward him.

Those hours of waiting were the longest I have ever known. I was eager to strike in the first flush of confidence,—that is ever my fault, for I grow timid, sometimes, on second thought,—but now I was in a hurry to worry through three mortal hours. Worry through them I did, somehow—but it was with quivering nerves I heard Drouet at last through the bolts. As the door opened I caught a glimpse of the sentry in the corridor. Drouet set my platter on the floor.

"There's your supper," he said.

"And the last that I shall eat here," I added laughingly. "You will not be sorry to bid me adieu?"

"Bid you adieu?" he asked. "How is that?"

"I am to be released to-morrow morning," I explained, "so that as M. le Duc and Mademoiselle Brissac are married. He has promised on his honor."

"So he is to have her at last, is he?" grinned Drouet. "Well, if he has faith, he has waited long enough. Had I been he, I would have waited months ago, and without troubling for a priest's blessing. That is the safest way, for he may weary of her—he may in time see one younger, fresher," and he leered at me in a way that sent the blood to my face.

"He has pursued her long, then?" I asked with what indifference I could muster.

"Long! Since the day she came last spring from the Sacred Heart at Toulouse, where the good sisters were caring for her. He has had his eyes sooner set on her than he was mad for her. At first we all thought that we should have a new Duchesse within a month, for M. le Duc is the man for a girl just out of a convent to resist; but someone whispered into her ear the story of the first Duchesse, and perhaps of other tales besides. What would not M. le Duc do to the tale-bearer? He could he discover him! The first Duchesse is dead—dead," and he laughed a mocking laugh. "There was a story! She was found dead this morning at the cliff-foot here, broken to pieces! She had flung herself over, perhaps. There were those who said that M. le Duc had wept for her, as he will weary of this one—that the fall was not wholly an accident. However that may have been, the girl refused to look at him after she heard the story. She was just from the convent, you see—her conscience was yet warm. M. le Duc swore he would have her. His indifference only inflamed him the more. Really, before this, I thought he would use the strong arm."

"But her uncle," I questioned. "What of him?"

"Brissac? Pouf!" and Drouet grimaced contemptuously.

man of water fit only for intrigue, where one talks in parables. He fears M. le Duc as he fears the devil; and he also fears this girl, who has a will of her own, despite her baby face. So he stepped discreetly to one side and permitted them to fight it out. Well, M. le Duc will have his hands full. I do not envy him. I prefer a wench whom I need not fear will stab me while I sleep."

"Yes," I assented. My hands were trembling as I realized that the moment had arrived. I marked how his poniard hung—there would be need of quickness, for he was a great, heavy fellow, much stronger, doubtless, than I.

"I must go," he said at last. "I will drink your health at the wedding."

He got slowly to his feet and stepped towards the door. As he passed me, I strained forward, plucked out his poniard and drove it deep into his thigh. I might have struck higher, but at the last instant my heart failed me. I saw his startled eyes staring down at me, then he fell with a great crash.

"Help!" he yelled. "This way!"

But I was upon him, the poniard at his throat.

"Drouet," I said between my teeth, "I spared you an instant since—I might easily have killed you. I swear I will kill you yet if you utter another sound."

He chuckled grimly as he looked towards the door.

"Many thanks, M. de Marsan," he said, "but I think I have already uttered enough to spoil your game."

For an instant I found myself looking over my shoulder with anxious eyes—then I remembered.

"There is no one there, Drouet," I said triumphantly, rejoiced that it was my turn. "The sentry has been attended to."

"Attended to!" he muttered, and looked again towards the door and then at me with distended eyes. "It is a plot, then!"

"A plot—yes," I nodded. "But to business. You will turn over on your face, if you please."

He hesitated, and I compelled his obedience with a prod of the poniard. He turned over slowly, with many groans.

"Now cross your hands behind you."

The hands came back reluctantly.

I snatched his belt from about his waist and in a moment had the hands secure. I pulled on the belt until the blood seemed ready to burst from his finger-tips, for I could take no chances. A strip from his leathern jerkin served as a thong for his feet. I rolled him over.

"You see how much easier it would be for me to kill you than to take all this trouble," I remarked. "But I am merciful—I am no butcher. However, I wish to be quite safe, so I shall be compelled to gag you."

I tore another wide strip from his jerkin and stuffed his mouth full of the straw that had formed my pallet. It was not over clean but was infinitely better than death. I bound the strip close over it and stood for a moment looking down at him.

"Ah," I said, remembering suddenly my instructions, "you have some keys somewhere about you. Let us see."

I knelt beside him, and in a moment had the keys—a great ring of them. As I arose I saw that he was making a frightful effort to speak.

"What is it," I asked, "the wound?"

He nodded violently.

I knelt again and looked at it. It was bleeding slightly, but did not seem of a serious nature.

"I will fix that for you," I said, and I bound a rag about it to stop the bleeding. "Now you are all right."

I realized that I was spending too much time over Drouet, and hurried to the door and opened it. In the half-light I saw the sentry lying against the wall. As I dragged him into the cell I shuddered to see that his skull had been crushed by a single blow from behind. Evidently my ally did not share my tender nerves.

I placed him against the wall opposite Drouet, who stared at me with distended eyes, plainly understanding nothing of the mystery of his death.

"That would have been your fate," I said, "had any but I died with you. I wish you a pleasant night, Monsieur," and I left the door bolting the door behind me. Certainly it would take Roquefort some little time to get it open again and learn Drouet's story.

The corridor was very dark, but I groped my way to the spot where the sentry had fallen, picked up his musket, and made my way down the floor below. There I found a torch burning, doubtless for the sentry's use. In a moment I was fumbling at the door of the cell through which Half a dozen keys I tried, and at last the lock turned. I threw the door open with feverish haste. Within, I saw a figure lying on a pallet in one corner.

"Fronsac!" I called. "Fronsac!"

He sprang towards me with a cry of amazement.

"Is it you, Marsan? We are going to escape then?"

"We are going to try," I answered, as I returned the warm pressure of his hands. "Come, Monsieur, there is not a moment to lose."

"But Valérie?" he questioned, holding back. "I do not understand. What of her?"

"It is to her we go," I said. "We will take her with us."

His face lighted with a sudden joy.

"Ah, in that case," and he motioned me forward.

I did not wait a second bidding, for I knew that seven o'clock,

hour of her promenade, could not be far distant. I thrust into his hands the sentry's musket, caught up the torch, and led the way down the stair—two flights more there were, and then a door. I tried it. It was locked.

For a moment my heart sank. Then I bethought myself of Drouet's keys. I tried them, one after another—joy!—the bolt yielded! I opened the door cautiously, for fear someone might be without. I could hear Fronsac chafing on the step behind me, but this was no time for haste. Evening had come in earnest and the court upon which the door opened was so dark that I could perceive no one. I listened for a moment, but heard no sound save a stave of a drinking-song shouted afar off.

"Come," I said, "it seems safe. And we have always a place of refuge in this tower, and we reach it in time to bolt the door behind us."

"But Valérie," whispered Fronsac, "where is she?"

"I was told that at seven she would walk upon the parapet," I answered, and by a single impulse we raised our eyes to the heights above us.

I confess I started at what I saw there—Mademoiselle Valérie, outlined against the red sky of the sunset, poised like a bird about to fly, gazing down at us. And at her side another figure—Roquefort.

XIII.

THE DOOR IN THE CLIFF

WITH quivering nerves I dragged Fronsac back into the shadow of the wall. I was certain that Roquefort had seen us, but as the minutes passed and he made no sign, I remembered that looking down into darkness was a very different thing to looking up into light. So at last I stood watching him without fear of his discerning us.

He was talking to Mademoiselle Valérie with great earnestness, and while I could see repulsion swaying her from him, there was some wizardry in his words or manner that chained her to the spot. Her face was turned away from him, but he spoke with accompaniment of look and gesture as though she were returning his intent gaze. What was he explaining?—some deviltry, no doubt! And I remembered that when he left her side we must devise some way of getting to her. As I stood there staring up at them a thought leaped to life in my brain that set my nerves a-quake—why could we not surprise him there at her side and hurl him down over the battlement? Then would Claire too be released from danger.

But how to gain the parapet? I saw that it ran along a structure that stretched from the great east tower to a smaller one on the north. Perhaps from the tower there was a door that opened upon it.

But Fronsac of a sudden caught my arm.

"Look!" he cried between his teeth. "God's blood! Look!"

I looked and saw Mademoiselle start from her companion in anger, stung by his words; but he caught her arm almost fiercely, and drew her to him. I could see the white face she turned to right and left.

"I will end it," said Fronsac, and stepped from the shadow, musket to shoulder.

But I sprang after him and pulled it down.

"Not that!" I cried. "Not that! That would spoil everything. The garrison would be upon us in a moment!"

He looked at me with working face.

"What then?" he asked. "Quick, Marsan, what then?"

"We must surprise him," I said. "We must gain the parapet. I too have an account to settle with that scoundrel!"

"But how?" he demanded. "Quick!"

"The tower!" I cried.

He hastened after me back to the door. I took care to lock it behind us—at least, we would be secure against surprise from that direction. Then we sped up the stair—up and up. At last, peering from one of the narrow windows, I saw we were on a level with the parapet, but there was no door—only the solid wall of stone.

Fronsac was cursing softly to himself.

"You should have let me end it down below!" he cried. "Now we shall be too late!"

"Come, there must be some way," I muttered in perplexity. "Let us go down a flight."

We retraced our steps, quivering with impatience. But a cry of jubilation burst from Fronsac as we gained the lower floor.

"There is a door!" he said.

And, sure enough, there it was—a little door of oak, set firm in the masonry. I held the torch near it and examined it intently.

"Well, we must pause here," I said at last, "unless, by chance, Drouet carried a key to this also. Let us see."

I ran rapidly through the bunch I had taken from him, trying one after another, but not one would throw back the bolt.

"Come, let us go down again," cried Fronsac. "I have still the musket," and he started down the stair.

I caught at the door and pulled at it savagely. It swung open under my hand.

Then I saw what fools we had been. Small wonder none of our keys would throw the bolt, since it was already thrown! Roquefort must have passed that way to gain the parapet. Then he must still be there! And my heart was beating savagely as we stole through the door and up a short flight of steps. In a moment I saw the stair above me and felt the fresh air of the night upon my face.

Darkness had come in earnest, and even here, high on the parapet, there was only the dim light of the stars. I feared that at the first turn we should run into a sentry, but we had no time to waste in hesitation.

"Do not fire!" I cautioned Fronsac. "What we do must be done silently," and gripping my poniard — Drouet's poniard — tightly, I stepped out. For a moment I could see nothing, and then, away in front of us, I caught a glimpse of two dim figures.

Fronsac saw them in the same instant, and would have sprung forward but that I held him back.

"Softly," I whispered. "Softly. We must surprise him, or he will outwit us yet. Give him an instant's warning, and he might hold us off till aid arrived. We must take no chances."

"As you will," he answered sullenly, and I saw he was hot to be at Roquefort as was I.

I crouched low into the shadow of the battlement, and, motioning Fronsac to follow, stole slowly forward. As we drew near I saw that Roquefort still held the girl by the arm.

"You will listen to reason," he was saying roughly. "Not to-morrow but the next day shall you be wedded. I will provide the man—and while he may be no beauty, I am sure he will love you as you deserve. There is no way out, Mademoiselle, I swear it. I am not like to permit a pretty bird like you to slip through my fingers."

She was looking at him now with defiant eyes. It was easy to see that the spirit of M. le Comte lived in her also.

"You are wasting words, Monsieur," she said quite coldly. "I have already told you my determination," and she made a little gesture towards the cliff. "A leap and it is over. Think you I should hesitate when I knew that on the other side lay a life-time of infamy? You do not know me, Monsieur!"

Roquefort laughed harshly.

"It is easy said, but not so easy done," he retorted. "Death is not pleasant when one looks it in the face. Besides, I shall take care of you. I shall see that this pretty flesh be not wasted in such a way. Some man must have it to wife first!"

I heard a low cry of rage behind me, and Fronsac leaped past me and upon this libertine. I saw Roquefort wheel sharp round at the sound of footsteps, but Fronsac was upon him ere he could draw his sword. The musket flashed in the air, but the other stepped lightly to one side and the blow fell harmless. Then I was upon him too.

Oh, but he was a man!—a match for both of us almost. I struck at his throat to drown the cry I knew would come, but he caught my wrist and held it in a grasp of iron. I felt him turning the point towards my breast, and struck madly at his face; then Fronsac's musket

rose again, there was a sickening blow, and his grip upon my relaxed. For a breath he stood staring wildly into my eyes, then slumped limply down at my feet upon the parapet.

"He is done!" panted Fronsac. "Curse him! He is done!"

"Yes," I said. "Yes," and looked down at him.

But my friend had turned towards the figure which stood so softly against the wall.

"Valérie!" he called, and I saw her sway forward into his arms with a little answering cry. No more I saw, for I turned my back. I would have others do when I meet my love after long absence and many perils. Yet I could spare them but a moment.

"We must go," I said, and touched Fronsac gently on the arm. "Come, Monsieur. For love you have a hundred to-morrows, but escape only a few hours."

He swung around upon me, and I could see how his eyes were shining.

"Marsan," he said out of a full heart, "I want you to know Mademoiselle de Cadillac—or, rather, I want her to know you."

I looked into her eyes and saw love and joy flaming there. Valérie it was a good thing to have brought these two together!

"Valérie," he added, "it is Marsan here who has saved us—we have devised this wonderful plan of escape——"

"It was not I at all, Mademoiselle," I protested, but she smiled at me with a little gesture.

"There!" she cried, and it was wonderful to see how fatigue and fear had slipped from her. "I quite know what to believe, M. de Marsan! Some time, perhaps, we may find a way to repay you."

I bowed over the hand she gave me. Had I not known and felt, I might have found it in my heart to envy Fronsac.

"And I," I said, "am happy in this chance to serve you. But we have not yet escaped—we are not yet at the end of the journey. Do not be foolish to linger here. We must be going."

"True," said the girl, and came suddenly back to earth. "Let us go, Monsieur. We will follow."

As we turned, I heard a groan at my feet.

"So he is not yet dead," muttered Fronsac between his teeth, as he picked up his musket for another blow. "Well, we will finish it."

But I caught his arm and held it back.

"No, no," I protested. "Not that. He is not a man to kill like a dog. Let us find some other way?"

"What other way can there be?" demanded my companion impatiently.

"We must not leave him lying here for the sentries to find out," I said. "We must conceal him somewhere,"

"Well?" and Fronsac made a gesture towards the battlement. "The cliff will settle all that."

But again I shook my head. He was worthy a better fate. Besides, to kill a wounded man——

"Let us take him with us down into the tower," I said at last. "They will not find him there, and we can still end it should there be need."

"As you will," assented Fronsac shortly, and we caught him by leg and shoulder and staggered towards the stair that led downward to the tower door. As we stumbled forward I tried in vain to pierce the gloom before us.

"Softly," I whispered. "There is a sentry at either end of the parapet."

"Not to-night," said Mademoiselle quickly. "I heard M. le Duc dismiss them just before he came to me."

I breathed more freely. Certainly Roquefort would not wish to be overheard, yet still this was an unexpected bit of fortune.

Down the stair we tugged him and through the little door, which I locked carefully behind us. We propped our burden in one corner with his back against the wall. He was breathing deeply, with a hoarse, guttural sound, which I felt certain was the death-rattle. There was nothing we could do for him, and we went on down the tower stair, bearing the torch with us. At the foot another narrower flight plunged downward into the living rock of the cliff. I hastened down it, the others following without question. Down and down it went—at what a cost of labor must it have been constructed! At last I was stopped by a little door set in the rock. A coil of rope lay before it.

Fronsac gazed a moment at rope and door, then up into my eyes.

"I begin to understand," he said. "But can we open that door, my friend?"

"We must," I answered. "There is no other way."

But I confess my heart fell as I examined it more closely, for it seemed as strong as the cliff itself. A dozen bolts, seemingly buried in the very heart of the oak, held it to the rock. I could catch a glimpse of them as I pressed my torch to the crevice between wood and stone, and I could see how thick they were. But to move them—to throw them back. I tried all the keys on Drouet's ring; not one of them would serve. I battered at the door with the musket, but could not even shake it. The sweat broke out across my forehead at the thought that this might be the end. I looked up and saw Fronsac watching me with a face from which he tried in vain to banish his concern.

"We have still at least four hours," I said, with what cheerfulness I could muster, and turned back again to the door.

Could I but cut the wood away I might yet throw back the bolts

with the end of my poniard. I hacked at it fiercely. It seemed like iron and I could tear away but a splinter at a time. At the end of half an hour I had made little progress.

I paused a moment to take breath.

"The watches are not changed till midnight," I said, seeing Fronsac's despairing face and that of Mademoiselle. "We have near three hours yet, my friend."

But as I turned again to the task a sudden clatter reached us from the hall above as of some one pounding on the tower door. I started up and stood in an instant, and was up the stair in three bounds.

"This way, men!" shouted a hoarse voice. "This way! Rescue!"

I sprang blindly forward, groped an instant in the darkness, and dragged Roquefort back from the door, cursing my folly at leaving it unbound.

For from the court came an answering shout, a rush of feet, and the wood groaned under a great blow.

XIV.

A PERILOUS DESCENT

"BACK! Back!" I cried to Fronsac, who appeared at the door, bearing the torch, and I followed down close at his heels, dragging Roquefort after me, cursing and striking at me madly with my fists, but too weakened by his wound to do any great damage. I descended in a few strides we were at the bottom.

"Your scarf!" I called to Fronsac, and snatched it from him. "Now help me here," and we twisted Roquefort's arms behind his back, and lashed them tight together. Then I set him down on the lowest step,—a horrible sight, the blood caked in his hair and about his face, drivelling, cursing, half-conscious. I could guess what an effort it had cost him to drag himself down the stair and give the alarm. I found myself beginning to admire him.

I turned again to the door in an agony of despair. To be caught here like rats in a trap, with success so near! But to penetrate the tower door! I saw Fronsac draw Mademoiselle to him and hold her against his breast. They had abandoned hope, then! I looked at Roquefort with fiery eyes, hating him suddenly with a white hate.

"At least," I said between my teeth, "you will be dead long before they reach us here. That shall be your reward for calling the guard to swear that, assassin!"

He seemed to understand, and glared at me fiercely.

"This way! Rescue!" he shouted hoarsely. His voice was drowned in this cavern where we were, but as if in answer there came a great crash upon the tower door above us.

It seemed for a moment that Roquefort's scoundrels must be

bling down the stair upon us. But the door held, and as I remembered how strongly it was built, I knew it would be no little task to break it through. The crash was repeated as we stood there listening—then a third time. I fancied I could hear the door splitting under this determined onslaught. Fronsac and Mademoiselle had forgotten all the world except each other. He strained her to him and stood looking down into her eyes, drinking in all the love they revealed to him unquestioningly in this last, desperate moment, whose terror banished coquetry. Had I Claire so, I too might have been content to die. Again came the crash upon the door, and again my eyes sought Roquefort's face.

And then in an instant I remembered! What a fool I had been not to think of it before! Pray Heaven it was not already too late! The keys!

I sprang upon him, merciless as a wolf, and with savage hands tore his doublet from his breast. He seemed to understand what I was after, and spat at me like some mad thing and tried to throw me off, then sank back exhausted, his lips white with froth.

In a moment my fingers had found a chain about his neck. I dragged it forth, and at the end were two keys. So the fox had kept always by him a secret means of escape from his den should the other fail him! I lifted the chain from his neck and the keys were mine. For a breath my hands were trembling so I could scarce hold them, but I gripped my manhood back to me and turned to the door. Were they the keys? They must be! I fitted them to the holes—they slipped in easily—the bolts flew back—the door opened.

A stream of fresh aid rushed in upon us, and I could see again the sweet stars in the deep heaven. The cliff dropped sheer away beneath us. I could see no semblance of foothold, yet the descent must be made. I knotted one end of the line tight to the heaviest bolt, then turned to the two, who were still lost in each other.

"Come, Mademoiselle," I said gently, "you must go first."

"Go!" cried Fronsac, waking as from a dream. "Go whither, Marsan?"

I pointed to the open door—the rope.

"And you have opened it?" he asked, amazed. "What witchcraft!"

"We must hasten," I said. "They are preparing some surprise for us over our heads yonder. Come. We will knot one end of this rope so that Mademoiselle can place her feet in it. Then, standing erect and steadying herself by holding to the rope, we will lower her quite safely to the ground."

I had made the loop even as I was speaking, and threw it a little over the cliff edge.

"Come, Mademoiselle," I said again.

But she drew back with a shuddering cry as she saw the abyss yawned before her.

"Oh, no!" she cried. "Not that! That is too fearful! never do that!"

It was not a time for soft words. Our lives could not be sacrificed to a woman's nerves, and I steeled my heart.

"Mademoiselle," I said, "you are holding all our lives in your hand. In a moment a crowd of ruffians will be through that door yonder—then it will be too late! No daughter of the Comte de Cadillac could be a coward!"

"Marsan!" cried Fronsac, "you go too far!"

But the girl took her hands from before her face and stopped with a gesture.

"No," she said quite calmly, "M. de Marsan is right! I thank him for his frankness. No daughter of the Comte de Cadillac could be a coward! I am ready, Monsieur!"

My heart warmed with admiration of her as she advanced steadily to the cliff's edge, sat down without shrinking, and drew her feet within the loop.

"That is good," I said. "There is no danger whatever, Mademoiselle, so long as you hold the rope firmly and keep your face to the rock. Come, my friend."

I could see her shudder as we swung her out over the abyss, but I admit that my own nerves were not wholly steady, but she held fast to the rope and in an instant was out of sight. Down and down I lowered her slowly and carefully, I keeping an eye on Roquefort meanwhile, to see that he essayed no mischief. But he sat quiet on the step where I had placed him, seemingly only half-conscious, and watched us with bloodshot eyes. Yet I was certain that some trap was hanging over us. There had been an ominous silence at some moments at the tower door, but I knew that his men would not abandon him so tamely. What trick they were preparing I could not even guess, but at last the weight lifted from the rope, and we saw that Mademoiselle, at least, was safely down.

"What next, my friend?" asked Fronsac. "What of him?" I glanced at Roquefort. "Has he not lived long enough?"

I looked at him as he sat drivelling there. Yet I had thought of killing a man but in a fair fight. And on the instant a sudden inspiration flashed into my brain.

"I have it!" I cried. "We will lower him down the cliff. He will take him prisoner to M. le Comte to deal with as he chooses! It would be a vengeance for you!"

I could see the daredevil in Fronsac take fire at the words.

moment he had pulled up the rope, and we were knotting it under Roquefort's arms. He resisted vaguely, weakly, like a drunken man, but we dragged him to the edge and pushed him over. He cried out hoarsely as he fell, and I thought for a breath that his weight would drag us over with him, but the rope caught in a crevice of the rock and gave us time to brace ourselves. Then we lowered him rapidly, rasping and scraping against the cliff, but there was no time to think of that. At last the rope hung taut.

"You next, my friend," I said to Fronsac on the instant. He would have protested, but I pushed him to the edge. "Hasten. Think who awaits you below."

Without a word he let himself carefully over the edge. I could see the rope quivering under the double weight, and noted with anxious eyes how it chafed against the edge of the rock. The moments passed, and at last I saw that he too was down.

I stooped to test the rope where the rock had chafed it, when there came a sudden hideous roar from overhead, a crash of splitting timbers—they had fired a petard against the door—had blown it down—I understood now the reason of their silence!

There was no time to hesitate. I caught the rope and threw myself over the cliff. My knees scraped against the rock, the rope burned deep into my fingers, still smarting from the dagger-cut. But I held fast, praying that they might not see the rope for yet a moment—yet a moment—yet a moment!

Some one tugged at it from above, then it suddenly gave way. I felt myself falling—I grasped at the cliff—I seemed to choke—and the world turned black before me.

XV.

ROQUEFORT EXACTS A PROMISE

I OPENED my eyes to find Fronsac bending over me. He had torn the clothing from my breast and had one hand on my heart.

"It still beats!" he said. "Thank God, it still beats! We must get him to your father's surgeon, Valérie."

To the surgeon! I had been hurt, then? And in an instant I remembered—the rope had been cut—I had fallen. Was I dying? The thought sent a shock through me.

"Come, Fronsac," I said, "what is it? How badly am I hurt?"

He replied with a cry of joy.

"Splendid! I feared that you were dead, my friend! Now let us see what bones are broken. Can you move yourself?"

For answer I sat upright, then got unsteadily to my feet. They looked at me as at one risen from the dead.

"But where is Roquefort?" I asked suddenly. "He has not escaped?"

Fronsac pointed to a dark mass which lay just at the cliff-foot.

"He is there," he said. "He is far past escape. He was bound to the rope when it broke. You fell upon him, which explains your escape. But we thought you dead!"

"The rope did not break," I said, "it was cut. They blew down the door with a charge of powder."

"But you are quite sure you have no bones broken?" asked Fronsac anxiously.

I stretched my arms and felt myself all over.

"Quite sure," I said at last. "Nothing worse than a few bruises. But let us look at him."

We brought him out from the shadow of the cliff and laid him on his back. Blood was oozing from nose and mouth, but his heart fluttered faintly.

"We must get him to M. le Comte," I said, "before he dies. Come," and I caught him by the shoulders.

Fronsac took him by the legs, and we set off through the forest, Mademoiselle following. The moon was just clear of the horizon, the night was warm and still. We had reached the ground just outside the wall of Marleon, and we left the town to the right, proceeding straight towards the hill where I had seen the camp. At the end of a few minutes I caught the gleam of the camp-fires. But they were a long way off, and more than once we were compelled to lay our heavy burden down and take a moment's rest. At last a sentry stopped us.

"We must see M. le Comte at once," I said. "This is his order. You will see the need of haste."

He peered into our faces, his eyes large with astonishment.

"I will take you to him, Monsieur," he said, and set off through the camp.

We had not far to go. At the end of a moment I saw M. le Comte's standard floating above a tent before which blazed a great torch. At the tent door a man was sitting, his head on his hand, the image of despair. Mademoiselle saw him also, and, with a little cry, rushed to him and threw her arms about his neck.

He looked up with a great start.

"Valérie, is it you?" he cried. "Here, safe in my arms. My daughter! what a miracle!"

He strained her to him as she lay sobbing on his breast. Then he looked up and saw us standing there.

"Fronsac!" he cried. "Marsan! Why, this is a deliverance! Who have you there?" he added, looking at our burden.

"This is M. le Duc de Roquefort," said Fronsac.

"Roquefort!" and M. le Comte was on his feet, the picture of bewilderment. He put his daughter gently from him, came to us,

bent over the unconscious man. "He is wounded?" he asked. "Bring him hither, then," and he held back the curtain of the tent. "Lay him there," he said, and we placed our burden on the couch.

M. le Comte looked at us again—at his daughter—at Fronsac—at me—at Roquefort, lying there with bloody lips.

"It is a dream," he said. "It is not to be believed—that two men should break their way out of that castle yonder and bring Roquefort with them. It is a dream!"

But Mademoiselle had her arms again about his neck.

"Is that a dream?" she cried, and kissed him full upon the lips. Then she fell back with a little, frightened cry. "What is it?" she asked. "What has happened? Your face!"

He looked at her with terrible eyes, and then at me.

"A wound," he answered hoarsely. "But 'tis healing now."

Yes, it was healing. I could see the drawn, puckered, white edges. A bandage hid the rest—but I could guess what it was like—what it would be always like! And I had been the cause of it!

I think he read my thought, for he held out his hand to me.

"M. de Marsan," he said quite gently, "you have proved it was not you who were the traitor, but d'Aurilly. I have yet to deal with him."

"I have already dealt with him, M. le Comte," and I smiled into his eyes, with a great lightening of the heart that he had forgiven me.

"Dealt with him?"

"With these hands," I answered. "It was he who planned the whole affair. Roquefort had arranged for him to marry Mademoiselle. The wedding was to take place to-morrow."

I could see Fronsac's face turn purple.

"The hound!" he said between his teeth. "The hound!"

"I knew that he was dead," said Mademoiselle. "Roquefort told me. But I did not know, Monsieur, that it was to you I was indebted for this deliverance. It is a great debt we owe you."

"It was nothing," I protested. "It was a joy to my heart to pull him down."

"Tell us," said M. le Comte simply.

So, as briefly as might be, I told them the story of what had happened in the torture-chamber.

At the end M. le Comte held out his hand again.

"You are a man, M. de Marsan," he said warmly. "I count myself fortunate to have found a liege so gallant. I shall remember it."

"But he has not told you all, M. le Comte!" cried Fronsac. "It was he who planned the escape—I was but a follower, a looker-on. I had despaired a dozen times, but he always found a way. It was magnificent!"

"No, no," I protested again, and stopped. M. le Comte was looking at me and laughing.

"M. de Marsan," he said, "I will spare your blushes. Only permit me to say that I shall not soon forget the man who hath returned my daughter, whom I had despaired of rescuing—who hath delivered mine enemy into my hands."

"But, indeed, M. le Comte," I said earnestly, "it was not I who conceived the plan. I could have done nothing of myself," and I told the story of the message. "This friend of yours in Roquefort's hold is no ordinary man," I added.

"No, he is no ordinary man," assented M. le Comte. "It is often one secures an agent at once so fearless and so full of resources. 'Tis a strange story, but not mine to tell," and he fell a moment silent. "Still," he continued warmly, "you will at least permit me to entrust you credit with the execution. I have myself found many times that it is easy to lay a plan; but often I have not succeeded so well in carrying it out."

He turned to where Roquefort lay on the couch. I fancied I could already discern the death-damp on his brow.

"He must have attention," said M. le Comte, and, raising the curtain, he dispatched a sentry for his surgeon. The surgeon was there, and bent over Roquefort with grave face. He wiped the sweat from his lips, raised his head, and examined with deft fingers the wound Fronsac's musket had inflicted, then, tearing away his clothing, put his ear against his chest. He listened a moment so, then stood up again.

"'Tis as I feared, M. le Comte," he said. "The wound in the head is nothing—a glance blow that tore the scalp and produced a palsy; but his chest is crushed; he bleeds within. I have seen many so who have fallen beneath their horses, but I have never yet seen one get well again."

"And how long will he live?"

The surgeon shook his head.

"An hour—a day—perhaps two days. One cannot tell. Let us try to bring him back to consciousness."

He bathed face and temples with cold water and forced a glass of wine between his teeth. The dying man groaned—coughed—finally opened his eyes and saw us.

For a moment he lay without moving, his eyes travelling from side to side to face. Then they rested on M. le Comte, and a bitter smile curled his lips.

"So—you have won!" he whispered.

"Yes—I have won!" but there was more of pity than triumph in M. le Comte's voice.

Roquefort's eyes rested on him an instant in puzzled inquiry, then he did not understand this change of tone. Then his eyes travelled to the surgeon's face.

"Am I done?" he asked. "Is this the end?"

The surgeon bent his head.

"Shall I summon a priest, M. le Duc?" he asked.

Roquefort's eyes grew bright with sudden resolution.

"A priest? Yes! At once!"

But there was no fear of death in his face—he seemed elate, almost joyful. I could not understand it. His face too had taken on a certain dignity it had before been stranger to—the lines of cruelty and harshness had disappeared—he was almost handsome, and his eyes were bright with purpose.

He coughed again, and a spatter of blood came to his lips. The surgeon wiped it away and gave him again of the wine to drink. We could see how it brought warm life back to him.

"M. le Comte," he said, when he could speak again, "I have a favor to ask of you. I am sure you can be a generous enemy—even to me, since I am dying."

"Ask on, M. le Duc," said the other in a softened voice. "What is it?"

"One of your men will take this ring," and he pulled a signet from his finger, "mount to the castle, and show it to the sentry at the outer gate. He will open without question. Your messenger will ask for Claire de Briessac. He will tell her that I lie dying here and wish to see her. She will come, I know. Will you do so much for me, M. le Comte?"

"Aye, and more," came the answer readily, and M. le Comte stooped and took the ring. "It shall be done. I give my word for it."

Roquefort's eyes blazed up with joy; then he lay back wearily upon his pillow. I felt a sudden fear spring to life in my heart. What could he want of Claire? I looked up to find M. le Comte's eyes upon me.

"M. de Marsan," he said, "are you too weary to perform this journey?"

Weary? No! Not when the journey led to Claire! When I should be alone with her, as I had dreamed, with only the stars for company and none to interfere!

"I shall be glad to go, M. le Comte," I said, and took the ring.

"There is need of haste," he added, glancing at the figure on the bed. "Do you wish a companion?"

"A companion? No, Monsieur. They might fire if they saw two men approaching. One they will not fear."

"True. Hasten, then; we will await you here."

I hurried out into the night, across the camp, and around the cliff to the road that mounted to the castle gate. The moon was in mid-heaven, and I could see the road stretching, a white ribbon, ahead of

me. I knew that others, looking down, could see me mounting, as I went I held my hands high above my head to show that I was peaceful errand. So I was permitted to pass without challenge and stood before the great gate.

"A message from M. le Duc de Roquefort!" I cried.

There was a moment's pause, then I heard the rattle of bolts and a little postern opened.

"Enter!" said a gruff voice.

I stooped and stepped through. The gate was clanged shut behind me in an instant. A mob of men-at-arms crowded threateningly about me.

"M. le Duc is now in the camp of M. le Comte de Cadillac," began. "He sent this ring by me to prove that I am his messenger. He desires me to bring back to him the body of Mademoiselle Cécile de Brissac."

There was a little stir in their ranks.

"What does it mean?" asked one at last. "What wants he of a girl?"

"I do not know," I answered, and I could not wholly keep the sternness from my voice. "He sent this ring that you might obey his order without question."

They nodded one to another, each placing his construction on the order. Doubtless they were all familiar with their master's passion for her, and so could fashion their own conclusion. Some half dozen of them drew to a corner and talked together in low tones. At last they came back to me.

"You shall have the girl, Monsieur," said one of them, "but you must leave us the ring for warrant."

I handed it over readily enough, and watched him as he hastened across the court and plunged into the dark doorway of the building beyond. The minutes dragged like hours. Would she come? Would she think?

A touch on the arm brought me out of my thoughts. I turned to find myself looking into the face of Roquefort's surgeon—the one who had gazed down upon me on the rack. Again some fancied familiarity in his features struck me, and his voice, when he spoke, made me start, so certain was I that I had heard it somewhere far from Marsan.

"A word with you, M. de Marsan," he said, and drew me down into the shadow of the wall. "M. le Duc is injured, is he not?"

I glanced around to see that none could hear.

"These others must not know," I began, "not yet."

"They shall not know."

There was something in his tone that drew my eyes to his face. I saw that it was set as with great suffering. Could it be that he loved his master?

"M. le Duc is injured," I said, "very badly,—so badly, I fear, he will not live."

"But he still lives?" he demanded eagerly.

"Oh, yes, and will for a day—perhaps two days."

He breathed a great sigh of relief.

"Thank you, M. de Marsan," he said. "I think my place is with him. I shall soon follow you."

He left me abruptly, and I stared after him until the darkness hid him. There was some mystery in his manner I could not penetrate. But I did not ponder it long, for two figures emerged from the doorway opposite and I saw that one was Claire.

She came straight to me.

"What is it, M. de Marsan?" she asked. "What has happened?"

"M. le Duc is injured," I said, so low that the others could not hear. "He is very badly injured—dying, perhaps—and wishes to see you."

"Dying!" she breathed, her face white with horror. "And he was so strong—so full of life! Oh, then I will go! Let us hasten, Monsieur!"

They threw back the postern and in a moment we were without—alone together.

XVI.



MADAME LA DUCHESSE DE ROQUEFORT

WE went down the road together in silence. For a moment my heart revolted at the warmth of Claire's allusion to the man; then I remembered that he was dying, and put the pettiness from me. I longed to speak to her, to take her hand, but I knew that fifty pairs of eyes were watching us from the battlements, and held my peace. But I could look at her—at her great, dark eyes, her red lips, the curls clustering about her neck, her lithe, active, perfect figure, promising even greater charms as the years passed.

She raised her eyes to mine and smiled tremulously at what she saw there.

"How far is this place to which we go, Monsieur?" she asked.

"Not far," I answered. "Would it were all eternity away!"

She smiled again.

"And you would wish to become a second Ahasuerus?" she asked, looking at me archly. "To keep walking thus for all eternity? Surely not?"

"With you!" I cried, all my love in my face.

She turned her eyes away. But as we passed a ledge of rock, where the shadow lay deep upon the road, she stumbled.

I know not how it was—I had thought only to catch her hand—but the touch of her set my blood aflame—she was in my arms, close

against my breast. For an instant she looked up at me, startled; then with a sigh, she yielded to me and laid her head upon my heart. I was far past words—far past anything but the deep, tremulousness of holding her, of gazing down into her eyes. She let me drink of them.

"How your heart beats!" she said at last, smiling up at me. "It is just here, under my ear."

"For you, dear life! Every beat of it!"

"And mine for you," she said. "Every beat of it!"

I looked up at the bright heavens—away at the distant hills.

"What is it?" she asked.

"That it should be true!" I said. "I have dreamed of it—longed for it—but that it should be true!"

"It has been true a long time," she answered softly,—"a long time, Paul."

Her voice lingered on the name. It was the first time that I had heard it from her lips.

"But not so long as I," I protested. "I have loved you from the moment I saw you in the Rue Gogard. And you?"

She was smiling up at me with infinite tenderness.

"I have thought of no other man since then," she said.

Again I looked out over the plain. This time the gleam of the camp-fires caught my eyes, and with a start I remembered my errand.

"Sweetheart," I said, summoning all my courage, "we must go down. M. le Comte awaits us. I pledged him I would hasten. M. de Roquefort may even now be dead. He loves you, I think, but not as I do."

"No, not as you!"

She was looking up into my eyes, radiant with love. Never was there another woman like her.

Yet we lingered for a time, as our parents must have lingered at the gate of Eden. But at last we had reached the plain, and made our way to the camp and to the tent of M. le Comte.

They were awaiting us. Roquefort seemed much stronger. He was supported on a pile of pillows, and but for the fever-glare in his eyes would not have appeared ill. The eyes brightened as we entered and a vivid flush sprang to either cheek.

"Come hither, Claire!" he cried, and she went to him, radiant with her loveliness. Even he seemed startled by it, and gazed at her for a moment without speaking.

"I have come to the end of the path, Claire," he said at last. "They tell me I may live a day, perhaps—no longer. And before the end I am going to ask you to keep a pledge you made me. See, I kept mine"—and he made a little gesture towards me—"as far as I lay."

Not till then did I understand, and my heart grew cold at thought of it.

"You know I have loved you, Claire," he went on, looking up into her eyes. "Nay, do not speak—do not protest! I have loved you! Had I not—had I not hungered for your love in return—I should have made you mine long ere this. But now, at the end, you must be mine! You have already promised, Claire! You cannot break your promise to a dying man!"

He paused—a cough choked him—and again there was blood upon his lips. I trembled to hurl myself upon him—to drag her away—but what could I say?—what plea could I offer? Oh, why did not she herself answer him?

But she did not answer—she did not draw away, as I, who stood there with starting eyes, watching her every movement, thought she must. She only knelt with her face buried in the cushions, shaken by sobs. But pity could go too far!

"You cannot deny a dying man, Claire," he repeated in a fainter voice, and I saw how little his strength was. "It means more to me than you can guess. I am dying without issue—without heir. I want Roquefort to be yours, Claire. It must not go to that scoundrel in Valladolid."

I remembered Fronsac's story of his hate for his next of kin, and ceased to wonder at him. But she—she—why did not she put him from her? I know the price would tempt most women, yet I had not thought it would tempt her. But a moment since she had told me—there!—why recall it? For now she stood suddenly upright and looked down into his eyes quite calmly.

"If you really wish it, M. le Duc," she said. "If you think it will make you happier, I am ready!"

He lifted her hand to his lips—he forgot that he was looking in the face of death. Oh, I could have slain him—could have slain them both! What a fool was I to trust a woman's word! And what a fool would I yet be should I betray myself!

But I had need for all my self-control. They brought in the priest, and Roquefort, in two words, gained his consent. They hastened after stole and surplice; Claire knelt at the bedside, her hand in his—a great silence fell upon the tent. And then the voice of the priest began the service, shortened somewhat to fit this strange occasion. My heart stood still as he came to the responses—I hoped madly that Claire might yet refuse, but her voice was the stronger of the two.

They pressed forward to kiss the hand of Madame la Duchesse de Roquefort,—mistress of a demesne second only to that of M. le Comte himself,—but I did not stay to witness it. Sick at heart—cursing woman's baseness—I went blindly forth into the night.

XVII.

A TEN YEARS' VENGEANCE

I OPENED my eyes to find Fronsac looking down at me. For instant I thought myself still at the cliff-foot, but a glance told me I was in bed, in a room that, till then, I had never seen.

"You know me!" he cried. "You know me! Tell me, Marsan, know me!"

"Of course I know you, Fronsac," I answered petulantly, stopped, astonished at the effort the words cost me. "I have been I cried.

"Very ill," he said, "but you are past danger now, thank C There, think no more about it."

He had no need to command me, for my brain seemed so n it could not think. I remember perhaps a dozen such intervals of consciousness. Always there was Fronsac bending over me, and s times I fancied there was another in the room, who whisked awa the first sign of my awakening.

A third face too there was. At first I did not know it, but st stupidly up at it—and then, at last, I recognized Briquet, the sur of M. le Duc. For a moment my blood ran cold to see him stan so, for I thought myself again upon the rack. But a second gl dispelled my terror. His face had changed. Stern it still was, bu longer lined by hate, and the eyes were almost gentle. How diffe from the coals of fire that had glared at Roquefort! I was too w to seek the clue to the change, which I marvelled at without in the understanding.

But one morning it was different. I awoke strong, refreshed, mind quite clear. It was like the dawn breaking over the hill sweeping the valley clear of mist.

Fronsac brought me meat and drink, which I welcomed eagerly. I was tortured with a great hunger. And as I ate I remembered i again—the escape, the journey to the castle, the scene in the tent, the priest's voice droning the service. Even yet I could not unders it—that a woman should break her word like that—and she had l me—yes, I was quite sure that she had loved me. But of a sudden t had been dangled before her face the coronet of a duchesse—the lands and lofty castle of Roquefort—and she had seized the bait. it had been offered her before and she had shrunk away. From m to month she had refused it, only to grasp it at this last desper moment. I could not understand. Perhaps she had been only pla with him; perhaps it was the sight of him lying helpless there had moved her. In any event, there was but one course for me. I r put her out of my heart. She was now on the mountain-top, I in valley; she was Madame la Duchesse de Roquefort, I but Paul de l

san, with no fortune but what my sword might win me. At the end I turned to Fronsac.

"Now, my friend," I said, pushing the food away, "you must tell me everything—everything that has happened since that night."

"Are you strong enough?" he asked, hesitating.

"Strong enough?" and I laughed, for the wine had put new life into me. "I shall be out of bed to-morrow. By the way, where am I?"

"You are in a room of the castle of Madame la Duchesse de Roquefort."

He saw the flush that leaped to my face, and smiled.

"Does that surprise you? The morning after the wedding you were found roaming about the walls quite mad. The exertion of the night before had been too much for you, it seems, and your hands were in a horrible state. We, who were thinking only of ourselves, did not think of you. You should have heard Valérie! Well, Madame la Duchesse insisted that you be brought straight here, and here you have since remained."

"And you with me," I added gratefully. "It must have been a trying task. I can imagine your self-denial, my friend."

"Nonsense!" he interrupted hastily. "It were little to do for the man who saved my life—and more. Besides, it was not only I."

I looked at him with questioning eyes.

"Briquet," he said, "did more than I. He seems to have a great interest in you. He is a strange man."

I pondered over this for a time.

"I do not know," I said at last. "I fancy sometimes that we have met before, far from Marleon, and yet I cannot be certain."

"But I have other news," and Fronsac looked at me, his face crimson with happiness. "About Valérie and myself."

I understood, and held out my hand to him.

"Yes," he said, "M. le Comte has given his consent. We will be married so soon as I can take you with me to Cadillac."

I pressed his hand with sincere warmth.

"Then, indeed, I must hasten to get well!" I cried. "To think that I should be keeping you apart!"

"You have not kept us apart," he protested. "It was you brought us together. Valérie warned me not to approach her until I could bring you with me—I swear, I am almost jealous of you, Marsan! The troop has heard the story of the escape—you will see how they will welcome you! M. le Comte himself remained until he was certain you were out of danger. You have quite won his heart, my friend."

I felt my lips trembling.

"And after that scar!" I murmured.

"Yes, after the scar! Think, I have even seen him kissing the

hand that inflicted it—for he has taken Madame la Duchesse to heart also. Well, I am glad, for she has need of a protector.”

He read in my eyes the question which I dared not ask.

“Roquefort died an hour after the wedding,” he said. “Do you know, Marsan, I fancy we never did him justice. He proved a man to the last!”

Yes, he proved a man to the last! It is a man’s part to win—he had won!

“He died alone,” continued Fronsac, “alone, but for his surgeon. Briquet came to the tent almost before the wedding was concluded and insisted on remaining at his master’s side. Madame la Duchesse thought her place, also, was there. Roquefort had dropped asleep, worn out by the excitement of the evening, and it seemed certain he would sleep till morning. A couch was brought for her, and she lay down, leaving Briquet to watch the sleeper. Scarcely had she closed her eyes, when a loud cry startled her awake. Roquefort was sitting upright in the bed, the blood pouring from his mouth, staring in terror at Briquet, who was calmly wiping it away. Death caught him with a look still on his face—it was not good to see. There were some witnesses that Briquet had interfered, but M. le Comte shut them off. He seemed to understand.

“So I fancy there is an end to the feud between Cadillac and Roquefort,” he added, smiling. “The cousin from Valladolid has been busy about his business, swearing great oaths. Madame la Duchesse is already set about readjusting the rentals and rebuilding her peasant huts. They idolize her! There is a woman! What a duchesse makes!”

I could picture her to myself—she were worthy to mate with a king—to give a nation its rulers!

“You are weary,” he said, seeing that I did not reply. “I have been running on without a thought of your condition! What a man I am! There, you must sleep,” and without heeding my protest he gathered up the dishes and left the room, closing the door behind him.

But I could not sleep. My brain was full of what he had told me. I saw Madame la Duchesse de Roquefort moving like a queen among her vassals. There existed no longer Claire, the sweet, simple, ingenuous girl I had known, new to the world, fresh from the convent—there was now only the great lady. M. le Comte himself, great as he had been proud to bend his head and kiss her hand. Who was good enough, strong enough, bold enough, to aspire to her lips? We would still love the girl—I would hold her locked in my heart—the great lady would go her way. And I thought of her as she had been on that last night of all—I felt again her warm, sweet body in my arms, I gazed again into her eyes and saw love there—I heard again her voice.

"And mine for you! Every beat of it!" God! And a moment later she had fallen!

It was long before I slept, but tired nature asserted herself at last, and it was not until another morning dawned that she lifted her weights from off my eyes. This time it was Briquet I found at my bedside, and I noted again how his face had softened and grown human. He smiled as he saw my eyes on his.

"You are better," he said. "It is easy to see that. You will soon be quite well."

Again the voice—where had I heard it? I must penetrate this mystery.

"M. Briquet," I began, "my friend has told me how deeply I am indebted to your care, and I wish to thank you. But have we not met before?"

"I should not think you would forget it," he answered readily. "I was called to attend d'Aurilly—and you."

"Yes—I know," I said impatiently. "But before that?"

He hesitated a moment, then drew from his pocket a small book, tore out a strip of paper, and wrote upon it a rapid sentence.

"I am quite willing that you should know," he said. "In fact, I believed that you already knew," and held the paper before my eyes.

"Monsieur," I read, "I have learned of your demeanor at the question, and am grateful, for I am he who brought the warning to Marsan."

There could be no mistaking the handwriting, and I looked at him amazed.

"It was you, then," I stammered,—“you.”

"Yes, I. Looking up at me from the rack, I thought you knew me."

"No," I said, still looking at him wonderingly. "I could not place you. I did not suspect——"

"That I could be a spy, a traitor?" and he laughed, with some of the old look back upon his face. "Let me tell you the story, Monsieur; perhaps you will no longer wonder. My father lived at Lembeye, and managed to save some money. He determined that I should have a career, and so sent me to Paris to become a student of medicine. That was ten years ago, and I came back to my home to find it desecrated. M. le Duc de Roquefort had ridden through the town at the head of his ruffians. As he passed our gate, he saw my sister standing there, a pretty girl of seventeen, fresh as the dawn, with brown eyes that were always laughing. Without checking his horse, he leaned down and swung her to the saddle before him."

He paused and passed his hand before his eyes, as though to blot out a vision.

.. "It was done in an instant," he went on at last. "My father could

do nothing. He could only stand and watch her carried away, screaming, struggling, with those other devils looking on and laughing. It was then that I came home. I had been away for four years. No one knew me. I buried my old self and started to find my sister. I found her here at Marleon, Monsieur; you can guess in what condition! The child killed her,—she was happy to die,—and I buried them together. There was nothing left but my vengeance. I thought at first to kill him—but that was so poor a way! I gained entrance to his household first as a man-at-arms, then as his physician. I won his confidence only to betray it; he told me his plans and had them come to naught. Cadillac at first refused to trust me, but I told him my story, and he has served him well,—how well you will never guess, Monsieur, nor how many ways I tortured this monster. And at the end I told him he died looking at me.”

He stopped. I could find nothing to say. I gazed at him, fascinated.

“Now it is over,” he said. “Now there will be room in my life for other things than hate. I shall go back to Paris. I have waited long only to see you out of danger, M. de Marsan. You are out of danger now,” and he held out his hand. “Adieu.”

I took his hand in mine and pressed it. I could find no blame for him in my heart.

“Adieu, Monsieur,” I said, “and again thanks for your kindness.”

“I mean to devote my life to it,” he said simply, “so much of my life as is left to me,” and he was gone almost before the words were spoken.

I lay for long looking at the door, pondering on his story. What vengeance! To play traitor to a man for long years—to seem his friend and yet to hate him—and then, at the end, to lay the treachery before him! I understood now, as M. le Comte had done, that look of terror in Roquefort’s eyes, and found it in my heart to pity him.

XVIII.

LIGHT!

THE day passed without further incident. I took a turn about the room on Fronsac’s arm and found that my strength was fast returning. I ate the food that he brought me, and lay staring at the ceiling as drowsiness overtook me. Yet, despite myself, I was not content. More than once I caught myself listening for I know not what—a light step in the corridor, the rustle of a dress, the sound of a voice—expecting the door to open and show Claire there. What a fool I was! What time had she for me? She was busy with the affairs of her duchy, great lady!

Night came at last, and darkness, bringing sleep with it. Dawn found me strong, refreshed. I arose and walked about the room,

though my legs still trembled somewhat, I was certain that once on horseback I should be quite myself. I was determined to leave Marleon as soon as might be—a horror of the place possessed me.

Fronsac found me dressed, and I lost no time in announcing my wish to set out with him for Cadillac.

"But you are not strong enough," he urged. "Let us wait. There is no cause for haste."

"If Mademoiselle Valérie heard you say that!" I laughed. "I can see her awaiting you in that arbor by the river's edge."

"So it is for my sake!" he said.

"No, it is not for your sake, my friend," I answered earnestly. "At least, not wholly. I am itching to leave this place. There is no quiet for me here."

He looked at me for a moment questioningly, but I did not meet his eyes. My secret must remain my own.

"Very well," he said quietly at last, "since you wish it, we will set out to-day. I will inform Madame la Duchesse. You will doubtless wish to thank her for her kindness."

"Yes," I answered thickly. "Yes."

It would try my strength to set eyes on her again—to speak to her. But I was a man, thank God! I could hide my heart!

Yet when at last we stood before her, I forgot my injured pride in the joy of seeing her—the calm brow, the dark eyes, the arching mouth, the white hand, and the swell of the arm lost in the lace above. What a woman! No longer the girl fresh from the convent—the fine lady! A duchesse—a queen!

"And so you are leaving us, M. de Marsan?" she asked at last.

Her voice brought me back to myself—she on the hilltop, I in the valley.

"Yes, I am leaving, Madame," I said. "I am quite well again, and my friend here is hungering for Cadillac and those that await him there."

Her face changed, and she sat gazing at me in silence for a moment. There was that in her eyes—but there!—why be, a second time, a fool?

"You do not seem well," she said. "Nor strong. Are you quite sure you can bear the journey?"

"Quite sure, Madame."

She made a little gesture of impatience.

"I have to thank you, Madame," I added, "for your kindness in receiving me here. It was very foolish of me to be ill."

"Very foolish," she agreed, looking at me again. "Very foolish. I do not think you realize how foolish. I had thought you a man of wit, M. de Marsan, but I find you very dense!"

I flushed at the words, but dared not look at her. I must go, or I

should be upon my knees before her, a beggar for her slightest favour. I glanced at Fronsac, who stood with folded arms, frowning deeply.

"Adieu, then, Madame," I said.

She held out her hand to me. I knelt and kissed it, not daring to look up into her face; remembering, with a great rush of tenderness, the times I had already kissed it. I was aflame to snatch her to me, to assert my claim to her, to kiss her arms, her neck, her lips, to tell her if she had forgot that scene in the moonlight——

"M. de Fronsac," she was saying, "listen—I have a little story I wish you to hear. You, M. de Marsan, remain where you are. There was once a girl taken suddenly from a convent, where she had spent her whole life, and planted in the midst of a turbulent court. The ruler of the court looked on her with lustful eyes, yet had the honour to offer her his title. But she heard strange tales of him which frightened her, and at last she saw another, nearer her own age, who seemed to her the very rose of gallantry and courage. So she put away from her all thought of the other, and at last—one night—her lover claimed her. But the other lay dying. He was lord of wide lands and of a proud title. These, he said, he wanted her to have, even at this moment, when their marriage must be one unconsummated. And as I knelt beside his bed, listening to him in patience, for she remembered he was dying, of a sudden the thought came to her—why not take these things for her lover? Oh, it would be a joy to give him place and power—more than her mere self! Why not give him these also?"

She paused for a moment—her voice was trembling so. I could not look up—I dared not, lest my eyes be blinded.

"You will pardon me, M. de Fronsac, if I tell the story very badly," she said, with a little, unsteady laugh. "But it moves me greatly, for her lover did not understand. He fancied she desired place and wealth for herself, when it was alone for him. He did not comprehend the greatness of her love. He was stricken with fever—and as, night after night, she listened to him in his delirium, she knew that it was his fault—that she had driven him mad—and her heart grew cold with fear that he might not get well. But he did get well—he came to her to say good-by—he closed his eyes to all she had intended, to all she had wanted him to see. He wrapped himself about with his pride, which he fancied had been injured, and would not look at her. What think you of such a man, M. de Fronsac?"

"I think him a fool!" said Fronsac savagely.

But I did not heed him. I was looking up, up into her eyes. And I read there the same story they had told me once before. There could be no mistaking!

"Claire!" I cried,—*"Claire!"*

And she, in her great love and strength, stooped and raised me from the seat beside her.

AVOWALS

BEING THE FIRST OF A NEW SERIES OF
"CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN"

By *George Moore*

Author of "The Untilled Field," "Evelyn Innes," etc.



EVERY author returns to criticism when he is weary of original work, and I think I have earned the right to an æsthetic holiday. Six years ago I began "Evelyn Innes," and there are four hundred and fifty pages in that novel. I had to put the novel aside to write "The Bending of the Bough" for the Irish Literary Theatre, "and when that job of work was done I finished "Evelyn Innes," and then I wrote "Sister Teresa," and there are two hundred and sixty pages in that novel. Then I had to write another play for the Irish Literary Theatre, "Diarmuid and Grania." This play, written in collaboration with Mr. Yeats, is founded on the celebrated legend of the lovers who fled for seven years from Finn "along Ireland and across Ireland and from kingdom to kingdom."

Now, the filling of so many pages with words is not an inconsiderable labor, but the length of the texts is only a little difficulty in comparison with the great difficulty,—the assimilation of moral atmospheres. I had to write "Sister Teresa" many times before I acquired the conventual atmosphere; two years had to pass before I could kneel with a nun in prayer; and this sloughing off of one's ordinary self, this acquisition of new thoughts, new feelings, new ideals, new modes of expression, has often caused me to wonder, and I have often stayed a moment on the convent threshold looking back and forward.

Following close upon these voluntary changes of moral nature there came a real change, a revolution of feelings and ideas never experienced by me before. The England that I had loved always became hateful,—every English aspect,—and the ideals that had inspired me fell and crumbled away. The change came stealthily. I remember the first time I noticed it. I stood under an autumn sky, a tumult of purple and flying gold; and looking across a wooded park I saw the Burran mountains through a vista, masses of rocky hills; the blue gloom drew the landscape into a beautiful picture, and I perceived a pathetic beauty in the poor Irish country that I had not perceived before.

The seed was sown that autumn evening, but it was not till three

months after that I began to loathe England, and to hate the w and to feel that I could not live among people who thought right that I thought wrong, who indulged in such miserable lying and se deception the moment it was their interest to do so. That is how I f then. I know now that the English acted neither better nor worse th any other people. I have learned that every people would have acted the English acted. I have learned, alas! that morality is a myth. T mythical character of morality will form the subject of another arti—the purpose of these lines is to tell a few facts about myself whi will introduce, and I hope agreeably, the many various æsthetical a moral views that have perplexed and interested me for the last f years.



In the seventies France called me from Ireland, and in 1902 listened for the call again. France called me but faintly; Ireland called me loudly from England. I waited for France to call me again. I stood listening between the old love and the new—hesitations between the decadent and the crescent passion are but subterfuges—and the temptation to return to my own country overcame me. I yielded to the rustic beauty, seeing charms in her Gaelic face that I had not seen twenty years before. Was not my country engaged in the perilous and fascinating artistic adventure of a language revival? The English language, I argued, has been spoken and written so much that it is no longer fit for literary use. The dialects are extinct, and the language is divided into the formal and colorless idiom of the educated class and the debased idiom of Whitechapel. I saw in the Irish language a new literary medium; it interested me as a new musical instrument interests a musician. But I could not spend the whole of my time admiring an instrument I could not play, advising peasants—the future progenitors of our literature—to speak a language not one single word of which I knew. A man of letters must write; as well advise a sinner to the singing-bird as to ask the man of letters to become a language agitator or a proselytizer. I had to write. "The atmosphere," I said, "is within me. I shall not experience the difficulty I experienced with 'Sister Teresa,' and I'm weary of the long novel—I will write stories about peasants and priests!" I composed one, but before writing I told it to a friend walking through Rathmines, and he said that if I were to write a book about Ireland it would be a book of recollections verified by observation. The reason he gave impressed me. "The best literature," I said, "is memories verified by observation." On such literary accidents as these are books begotten. When I returned home I wrote the story, "Julia Cahill's Curse," and then I wrote another, and now they are all written and published, and I am behoven to heave up the burden of a long novel on my shoulders. But souls are heavy burdens.

and a critical frolic tempts me; contemporary literary opinion needs poking up, the eternal altars have been neglected. I will lay a few fresh wreaths upon them.

◆

I said in "The Untilled Field" that every nation has its special genius. It is clear that the genius of Germany has manifested itself in music. Goethe and Heine have produced beautiful poems, but there was little literature before Goethe and Heine, and there has been very little since, whereas the musical tradition has never ceased—Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner; and to-day Richard Strauss occupies the first place in modern music. We could spare Goethe better than Beethoven and Purcel better than—shall I say Keats? We certainly could spare Turner better than Shakespeare, and why? because neither painting nor music is England's special genius. Her special genius is poetry, and her poetical tradition is as unbroken as the musical tradition in Germany. In the sixteenth century Spenser was the greatest poet in the world, and there can be no doubt that Swinburne is to-day the greatest living poet. The English language and the English mind seem to go into verse instinctively, and English prose, though partaking of some of the beauties of English verse, occupies but a subaltern place in English literature. English prose may be compared to English painting. Reynolds, Gainsborough, Turner—select what fourth name you like—Moreland or Cotman or Millais, are comparable to Landor, Pater, De Quincey—select what fourth name you like—Carlyle or Newman or Ruskin. There is so much beauty in English painting and in English prose that we do not like to think of either as a deviation. But we must admit that English prose and English painting are minor manifestations of English genius. It would be better to cast out any four prose writers than to cast out Milton, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth. Let all go rather than lose one of these—it amounts to that or very nearly. However this may be, it is certain that the best English writers are historians and essayists. No one would think of replacing one of the five by a novelist, and as fiction is the province of prose writing, which it is the purpose of this article to debate, it may be as well to say at once that there is as little good fiction in England as there is good painting in Germany. German picture-galleries are like Mudie's catalogues, a profusion of works but no names. It is certain that no man writing fiction has ever written with such seriousness of purpose as Carlyle or Ruskin, Landor or Pater. Even Tennyson stands higher than Scott or Thackeray; and though by choice a domestic poet, Tennyson still enjoyed the freedom which has always been the right of the English poet. He tried to give up his freedom, but he could not give up a heritage of more than three hundred years. Fielding and Scott and Thackeray were merely writers

whose ambitions were to while away the leisured afternoons of young ladies on drawing-room sofas and the leisured evenings of old gentlemen in their armchairs after dinner. The long tradition of English poetry is that the heart of life is the real substance, whereas the tradition of the English novel, a tradition of about one hundred and fifty years, is that the novelist should skim lightly, respecting the moral and religious prejudices of his time. This was the law, and those who wanted freedom wrote in verse. Lord Byron probably would have given us better things than "Beppo" or "The Vision of Judgment," perhaps even better than "Don Juan," if he had written in prose. If he had written in prose, we certainly would have been saved such amateur bunglings as "The Bride of Abydos" and the "Siege of Corinth." It was not because he feared to shock the prejudice of the English drawing-room or the smoking-room that he did not write prose romances; he wrote in verse because verse has been considered the legitimate vehicle of thought from Spenser down to the present day.



Here I will interrupt my literary discourse in order that I may take credit for having liberated the English novel. When I first appeared on the scene the English novel was published in three volumes at thirty-one shillings and sixpence. It was therefore entirely in the power of the librarians. If they did not take a book, the book ceased to exist; no one would buy a book in three volumes at thirty-one and sixpence; therefore no one wrote anything in a novel that it was thought the librarians might object to. But I did, and my first novel, "A Modern Lover," was rejected by the librarians, and after a conversation with one of the librarians I understood that I should have to undo the bondage of the librarians or write according to the fashion of the time. I decided to undo the bondage of the librarians and published "A Modern Lover's Wife" at six shillings.

Having claimed my due, I pose the question, Why is it that England has failed to produce a first-class work of fiction? It is refreshing to ask these questions, they lead into pleasant meads of meditation, and this is not the first time I have mused in these meads. I remember trying once before to answer this question, and I pointed out that the tragedies of Shakespeare were every one the development of a moral idea, that "Hamlet" was but the tragedy of doubt, that "Macbeth" was the tragedy of ambition, that Lear was the tragedy of parental altruism. "A nation," I said, "is interested in moral ideas in its infancy. As a nation grows old it becomes interested in discriminating between different classes, the grocer and the baronet, the Methodist and the Unitarian; if the author is an American, between Americans who go to Paris and Americans who stay at home. As a nation grows old its language becomes polluted. In the beginning language is like a w

head from which all may draw pure water. The well passes into a rivulet, the rivulet flows into a river, the river passes through the town, and henceforth the water must be passed through a filter. Style is the filter that a language that has been much written in must be passed through. Milton was the first stylist.

The English novel was invented after the great period when men were interested in moral ideas. The prose tale appeared in England when social life had reached its highest point, in the middle of the eighteenth century, and the first novel seems to have dictated the character that the English novel has preserved to the present day. As we read "Tom Jones" we see that Fielding looked upon the novel as a less serious form of literature than poetry, and that his intention in writing "Tom Jones" was to provide drawing-room amusement. The attitude he adopts is that of an entertainer; the entertainer's tone of voice is heard at once, and the story is furnished with social types so obvious that the most casual can understand. There is a man called Allworthy, and the name indicates the author's æstheticism, and there is a squire who is only what country squires are supposed to be, a rough man with a taste for hunting and port wine. Sophia is an unsullied white dress. Tom Jones has a nice eye for lasses, and he is always ready for a fight—a bull terrier and nothing more. There is a fashionable lady, and nothing is known about her except that she once took Tom Jones into her drawing-room. There are little homilies, and it is impossible to imagine any writing more trite than these. Out of what depth of life do they speak? Out of what depth of life does the book speak? By this question, and by this question only, can we discriminate between good and bad art. If we go on and apply this test to all novelists writing in English, we find that none has spoken out of a deeper depth than the first plummet sounded.

At the beginning of the century there was a woman who wrote very nicely, and it was her genius to conclude the English novel on the lines already laid down by Fielding. Whereas in Fielding there is some animal passion and many humorous incidents, Miss Austen's genius is to describe manners with patience, to discuss the order in which ladies should enter a carriage, and every kind of social distinction. I think I can see her sitting at her desk writing out her staid little pages while her sister is working a tapestry screen at the fireplace. The literature and the needlework are painstaking and conventional. Whatever merits either has is obtained by a strict obedience to convention. Great art is always licentious (I use the word in its grammatical meaning). The great artist, like the prophet, is a law to himself; but some little beauty and quaintness is obtained by obeying convention, and the men and the women that Jane Austen writes are as prim and as moral as the strangely colored flowers and the dogs that her sister stitches on the screens. The domestic mask is never lifted. We read on until a great

fear seizes us, and we wonder at last what these demure men and women do when they leave Highbury and go up to London, what crimes they commit; and her admirable reticence on these points almost justified in considering Jane Austen as a tragic writer.

After her came the pompous and garrulous Scott, and after the facile and commonplace Thackeray, who did no more than dress up the Fielding novel in modest Victorian clothes—long drawers, erinolines, wide trousers and whiskers. In one of his books there is an adventuress,—and a very Victorian adventuress she is,—a governess who marries into an aristocratic family and about whom the author only tells us that her intimate friend is a lord and that he makes presents of jewelry; he knows a little about her external life, but does not know if she be a cold or a sensual woman, and the first gift of the adventuress is sensuality. Shakespeare had no doubt about this, nor had Balzac.

Thackeray's mind was very second-class. The ambition of first-class society is to shuffle off restraint and to become vulgar; the effort is factitious, but it is an aspiration towards liberty; in second-class society we meet no such aspiration, only worn-out conventions and mincing manners. Thackeray was like his name—second class. What an artificial gentility the syllables exhale. Thackeray! If he had not written a novel we could easily imagine the "satire" such a name would write about young ladies who wished to be married, drawing-room satire, gentle ridicule at every little peculiarity that may be laughed at with propriety in the drawing-room. He was a contemporary of Charles Dickens, and Charles Dickens's writings are as like his name as Thackeray's are to his. If they did nothing else, both men have produced a literature worthy of their names. Who but Charles Dickens could have written "Dombey and Son" and Sam Weller, and the horrible quotation, "Beware of widows, Sammy"? If these works were anonymous, I can imagine some great æsthetician deducing from them the name of the author. Balzac would have invented the name. Charles Dickens! Who could have written the story of the man who went to Paris to be gillotined for somebody else? Who could have invented Bill Sykes and Nancy? for, notwithstanding her chum, Nancy is as unreal as Travelling As a writer he ranks as high as Donizetti, Bellini—perhaps Verdi.

After Dickens come a number of women, and I am sure that someone is itching to remind me of George Eliot, and someone else is itching to remind me that the Brontës wrote "Jane Eyre" and "Wuthering Heights." Someone else, I am sure, is thinking of Mrs. Gaskell. Victorian life is long and editors of magazines are patient, and all these novels might be analyzed and dissected, but my object, I am afraid, is merely to affirm rather than to argue, and as well here as elsewhere I may say my few words about women.

They are very unlike men. The gentle cow is unlike the heavy architectural bull, the horned stag is unlike the foolish long-eared hind, but I know of no animal in which the sexes are so distinctly differentiated as in mankind. The male animal seems to us more beautiful than the female in every kind but our own. We have doubted the beauty of women very little. De Musset said that most of woman's beauty existed in man's love of her, and sometimes I have thought that perhaps De Musset was right, and that, set free from human desire, we should see woman as a small, weakly creature, ridiculously shapen, with big hips and sloping shoulders, comparable neither for strength nor beauty with the wide-shouldered, lank-loined, bearded creature she follows, and whose dinner she cooks inadequately. But if savage woman is inferior to savage man, civilization has made amends for original defects and redesigned her incomparable and dainty, delicate, subtle, and rhythmical, with a little, voluted ear and hair abundant and odorous.

Our concern is with the mental rather than physical woman, but mentality is dependent on physical structure. Woman is beautiful in detail and she excels in detail, but she never attains synthesis, for she herself is not synthesis. Every generation pours thousands of women into the art schools, and after a few years they marry and art is forgotten. Such was the fate of Jane. I cannot trust myself to tell you Jane's story, you must hear it from Tonks. The moment of Tonks's life is when he stretches out his long legs in front of the fire and says: "Jane destroyed all belief in women as artists. I am paid to teach them, and I teach them, but believe in their artistic future, no, not after Jane's failure." Jane was a Slade pupil for three years, and was spoken of as a genius in all our conversations. It was contended that she would darken Rembrandt's glory. No one knew exactly what Jane would do, but we were sure she would do something. Tonks looked upon her as Catholics look upon the Virgin, as one who would intercede for him if his own art failed, she would give him an immortality by proxy. But Jane's marriage overthrew his immortal hopes, and now she draws to please her little boy.

Women like art till the more serious concerns of life begin for them, and George Eliot, who had no babies, continued to stir a sticky porridge all her life long, a substance compounded of rationalism and morality without God, which has been swallowed by all serious critics. A little ray of light has fallen. "Romola" is admitted to be a dull book, but the dear things will not surrender all their mistakes at once, they cling to "Scenes from Clerical Life." If we're wrong about that, Heaven help us! For no man is great enough to admit that he is soulless, that he has no right to exist, that it were better if he had not been born.

Women have succeeded better in painting than in novel-writing.

Madame Morizot made an exquisite and beautiful adaptation of the of Manet; she carried the art of Manet across her fan, and in doing so she invented an art for herself, and her paintings will always delight those who can appreciate good painting. And then there is Mrs. Browning, who wrote exquisite marginal notes to her husband's poetry. When women try to think or to construct, their literature becomes less, it becomes nondescript, and one does not know whether to compare Daniel Deronda to an ox or a mule. The delicious and exquisite is not notable for philosophers or for artists, but for queens and courtesans. It is said that women have succeeded as queens. I am not a historian and cannot argue that point. Women have certainly succeeded as actresses and as courtesans,—yes, and as saints; best of all as saints; they have worshipped worthily the Gods that men created.



My pen pauses, and I ask, What is the theme of this article? That English novelists are not as great as English poets, that their writings are base and mercenary? Surely everyone knows this. Everyone knows that the four novelists I have named nor any four that can be named speak out of the same depth of life as Tennyson, Browning, Poe, and Swinburne. Again my pen pauses; it seems I cannot get away from the obvious, and yet no critic has said that fiction is the art that has been practised in England with better pecuniary and worse artistic result than other art, English sculpture, of course, excepted; sculpture is a question of latitude, and it has never got farther north than Paris.

But the fiction of other nations is not inferior to their poetry, their painting or their sculpture. The fiction of the great French novelist is not inferior to any French poetry, nor, do I think, is it inferior to English poetry. It were better to lose Goethe than to lose Beethoven, but I suppose it would be better to lose Balzac than to lose Shakespeare. The plays are more beautiful than the novels, and beauty is the first quality in a work of art. But there is a great deal of beauty in Balzac, and the vision of Balzac and the energy of Balzac are equal to the vision and energy of Shakespeare. For vision, energy, various and unceasing imagination "The Human Comedy" is the greatest prose work in the world. If the test—out of what depth of life does a book speak?—be accepted, Balzac is as great as Shakespeare, we have to take the extent of Balzac into consideration. In speaking of Balzac and Shakespeare one thinks of seas or of mountains. The Balzacian sea is certainly wider, but is it deeper than the Shakespearean? Perhaps the Shakespearean sea is deeper in places; there are deep pools in Shakespeare, perhaps. I remember a prose poem in which the mountains speak to each other after intervals of ten thousand years.

There is the same profusion in Balzac as there is in Shakespeare.

and how splendid profusion is in a writer ! Balzac and Shakespeare seem a profusion of light, an extraordinary radiation. Did Balzac not write "Droll Stories" because someone told him that he did not write French well, and he said, "I'll write a volume of stories in old French in the very origin of the language." And having written ten stories, he wrote twenty; and having written twenty, he wrote thirty, and everyone a miracle of wit. In these stories treating on the lightest subjects, gal-lants and their mistresses for the most part, the great mind of Balzac is revealed as clearly as the mind of Shakespeare is revealed in the scene between the gravediggers in "Hamlet" or in the eating of the leek in "Henry the Fifth." Everywhere we rejoice, and we rejoice continuously, in a mind free from prejudice and conventions. Balzac was not the dupe of titles when he devoted a page and a half to a duchess's armorial bearings. He stood apart smiling at life. The smile was not so sad nor so ironical as Shakespeare's, but it was a beautiful smile, the smile of France, and sometimes he burst into laughter, and his laughter was the laughter of Touraine.

Balzac and Hugo were the last of the great men whose inspiration was unceasing, and who did not make literature but who were literature. Balzac wrote a great story at a sitting: a sitting that lasted for eighteen hours. All that while he wrote, for no secretary could keep pace with him, and all that while he lived on black coffee. Then he slept for thirty hours. Hugo wrote "Hernani" in a month, and we can think of Balzac and Hugo as we think of the great Venetian living in the glory and exultation of constant creation. Veronese must have improvised "The Marriage Feast at Cana" with extraordinary ease, and I like to think he painted the immortal fiddler in a morning and went out in his gondola in the afternoon, thinking he had done a fair day's work. That was how men wrote and painted in the great times before science beckoned them away from the beautiful.

Balzac gathered literature everywhere, in the obscurest corners, like Shakespeare. He turned dross into gold, like Shakespeare. He was the mouthpiece of his age, like Shakespeare. He took from everyone, like Shakespeare, and never heeded the charge of plagiarism. Gautier must have written the sonnet in "Lost Illusions." I will lay my head on the block if it were not Gautier who wrote the sonnet to the Tulip.

*"Mais la nature, hélas ! n'a pas versé d'odeur
Dans son calice fait comme un vase de chine."*

"Dans son calice fait comme un vase de chine," that is Gautier's line or it is the devil's. And Gautier must have written the description of the studio in "Le Chef d'Ouvre Inconnu." The twisted columns and the oriental lamps are certainly Pasha Gautier's.

I am thinking now how much better I like Balzac's profusion than

Flaubert's constipations. The other day I read "Madame Bovary," it seemed merely a reasonable, terribly reasonable, an artistic book written by a very intelligent man. The novel passes for being the only written novel. Alas! it appeared to me badly written—in other words it appeared to me to be *written*. Ah, yes, *written, written* everywhere. Its music is the music of the pianola, and the pianola is played so fully at times that one thinks one detects human fingers here and there. Flaubert was not a novelist, he was a philosopher, a cynic, and a great writer, and he found his genius in "L'Education Sentimentale," and above all, in that book of satire of "Bouvard and Pécuchet."

The novels of the brothers Goncourt stand on a higher intellectual plane than the work of any English novelist. They contain many beautiful things, but it is not probable that I shall speak of them in these articles. I am inclined to speak of their disciple and the continuator of their style, J. K. Huysmans, for he seems to me to have written more enduringly. "Le Bas" is written with an intensity and originality of thought and an ease that I do not find in Flaubert or in the brothers Goncourt. His ironies flow easily, he finds his epithets almost as easily as Balzac, and we escape the pianola music of the unfortunate Flaubert. But no more than Flaubert can he be considered a novelist. The word has grown hateful, and I will never use it again. Tale teller is the word to be used. The art of tale telling must be the most difficult of all the arts. For though there have been many musicians and many painters, there have been but two tale tellers.

Balzac is a great city in which there are exquisite houses, great churches, and noble cathedrals, but never a peristyle or frieze. The pure perfect beauty of antiquity is absent, the which we find in Corot and Turgenieff, above all in Turgenieff. Strange indeed are the ways of God which guide, and we ask vainly why they should have placed the light of Greece, the light of the world, in the hand of a Scythian. Turgenieff thought very little of Balzac, and there can be very little doubt that Corot, the greatest landscape painter, would have thought very little of Turner; and wherein is matter for the subject of a second article.



FIRE WEED

BY HENRIETTA R. ELIOT

STRANGE flower, thy purple, making haste
To glorify each blackened waste
Of fire-swept land,
Is with a blessed meaning fraught,
And we—when pain hath fully wrought—
Shall understand.

MISS ATHERTON'S WANDERJAHR

By *Mary Moss*

Author of "Fruit Out of Season," "Julian Meldohla," etc.



I.

BELONGING to different scales of civilization, in the natural course of events they never would have entered each other's orbits, but life is occasionally capable even of bringing about the meeting of parallel lines, with playful intention and grimly inappropriate results.

It all happened simply enough. Since such entertainments were in vogue, Grace Atherton went to Mr. Penrose Cowan's studio tea in the same docile spirit with which she habitually dressed, dined, read the new book, played the prevailing game, and, Heaven save the mark! dabbled in highly sterilized slumming. For the matter of that, every detail of existence had undergone such competent sterilization before reaching her that, under a very perfect finish of manner and bearing, at heart she was perilously far from being immune.

Mr. Cowan's tea showed little of Bohemia. The studio was pleasantly free from plaster casts, messy draperies, unframed canvases, or long-haired painters. Instead of reeking of fresh turpentine and stale tobacco, the air was faintly sweet with roses and *veti-vert*. The subtlest knowledge and most delicately restrained taste alone could have created these harmonious apartments, in which a handful of choicely equipped men and women moved quietly to and fro, easily chatting in well-modulated tones. At the door Grace was greeted by her host, who looked like an immaculately turned-out St. John, not too young. Having secured a cup of tea, she crossed the room to inspect a moonlight scene apparently painted under the joint influence of Cazin and a Japanese fan. Mr. Cowan drew a deep breath of satisfaction; he believed that her coming placed him forever, gave him a certain cachet; henceforth he might frankly abandon himself to the social observances dear to his heart, instead of slaving away at the "art" which had been so useful a lever in prying open doors at which mere money might long have knocked in vain. His tale of guests was complete, yet the heavy portières of Louis Seize tapestry parted, and to his utter horror he saw

a brisk, handsome, smartly dressed young man, who shook hands dially, and then surveyed the company with open interest, remarking, "Some of your swell friends, Penrose, old man?"

Mr. Cowan nodded impressively. "Yes, just a few connections have been kind enough to drop in for a look at my things." There was a perceptible pause. "Can't you dine with me to-night at the Waldorf, Sidney?" he added in desperation.

Sidney shook an unabashed head. "Got another date. I'm in town over night. Just stopped to have a talk with you about the new issue of preferred stock; but there's no hurry, I can wait till your party's over."

Mr. Cowan was secretly wondering what excuse a man could make for turning his brother and business adviser out-of-doors, when the newcomer's irreverent eye lit upon Grace Atherton, bending her figure for a nearer view of the moonlight sketch, and he congratulated her genially: "Now, she's all right! She'll do! Just introduce her to me, that charming young lady in gray and I'll give you no further trouble."

"My dear Sidney!" Penrose could hardly articulate, "this is Miss—Grace—Atherton!"

"Thanks, old man,"—Sidney was disgustingly unimpressed, "I shall hardly get to the Grace this afternoon, though New York is a quick town. Miss Atherton is enough for to-day. Just take her out; I'll do the rest. I never got within range of one of them before."

"Well, you see, that's exactly it," Penrose began volubly, but found his sentence somewhat difficult of utterance; "Miss Atherton is—well—you understand how it is—young ladies like that—"

"Oh, you be d——d, Penrose," said his brother amiably, "it is five-fifteen by my watch. If by five-twenty you haven't managed to make me acquainted with your friend, I'll do it off my own back. I'm sure that wouldn't be the best way, anyhow."

Looking into his brother's agreeable, impertinent face, Sidney judged this to be no idle threat and, yielding to odious necessity, hurried across the polished floor with Sidney, murmuring perfumingly, "Miss Atherton, may I present my brother?"

Grace acknowledged the introduction with the slightest of smiles, and, seeing the stranger's extended hand, in perfect good nature gave him her empty teacup. At this he laughed with such spirit and pleasant mirth that she smiled in sympathy, without in the least seeing where the joke might lie. Mr. Cowan fled in despair; the situation was quite beyond him.

Sidney deliberately shifted the cup into his left hand. "This is a good one on me, Miss Atherton. Now suppose we take a fresh

This time he actually seized her hand, shook it, and held it considerably longer than necessary. She saw no good way of stopping him; her code was not framed for meeting emergencies. With much friendliness he continued, "Isn't there a place where we can sit down and have a heart-to-heart talk? You're sure to be whisked away from me here."

The young man's assumption of confidential intimacy fairly took away her breath. No one, not even Sussex Lawrence, would have made such a barefaced suggestion. Unaccountably, she succumbed to his masterful ways, and promptly found herself ensconced upon a secluded divan with Mr. Sidney Cowan at her side—so close, in fact, that she emphatically drew back from him.

He looked at her with imploring eyes. "There now, you are offended. Please, please be a little kind to me! Can't you think what it is to a tired workman all at once to find himself here, with *you*?"

He had no business to put that accent on the "you." It was unprecedented, familiar, impertinent, but, to her utter bewilderment, far from unpleasant. She ventured a glance at his face; fatigue had not told visibly upon his appearance, which was strangely to her taste. Brown and clean-featured, in point of actual good looks he was well above the average; but what chiefly attracted her was a sense of alert energy, of vitality, of gayety, all focussed for the moment in the one desire of being well with her.

"Are you fond of pictures?" She tried to put down the brake, unable to see where the present pace would whirl her.

"I adore Art," he rejoined with twinkling eyes. "Couldn't you go with me to the Metropolitan to-morrow morning? Old Penrose says they have some valuable paintings up there."

This time she was deeply annoyed and quietly arose to leave him. Quicker than thought he seized her hand, and she positively had to choose between remaining prisoner or informing the whole room of her predicament.

"Look here, Miss Atherton, don't you see I can't let you go like that? You are angry—the Lord knows why! Is there any reason a man shouldn't show a girl he likes her? If there is, you must tell me about it, and then I'll know better. But why on earth do you make yourself look beautiful,—not that you could help it,—and wear fetching hats and things, if you don't want people to adore you? And if they do, don't you expect them to tell you so?"

His voice and face showed such deep contrition that she sank back on the divan, oppressed with the enormity of her conduct, but unable to leave him in anger.

Relinquishing her hand, he spoke in hurried whispers: "There comes my finish! Quick, before she strikes us, when can I see you again?"

His watchful eye had truly interpreted the intentions of Mrs. Lawrence's redoubtable mother, who now bore down upon her. "Grace, dear,"—the lady gave no time for introductions,—“I have a message for you about the train to-morrow. The others all have to go by the limited—a breakfast or something as soon as they get to Philadelphia. Can't you really get off before the three-o'clock train—as she spoke Mrs. Lawrence eyed Mr. Cowan with marked disapproval.—“and, Grace, dear, perhaps you will give me a lift? One of the horses wasn't roughed and I had to send the carriage home. I and the girls are quite ready; everybody seems to be going, don't you think?”

At this interruption Grace had her first conscious moment of revolt, but while inward feelings worked confusedly along new lines, her outward habit was sufficiently strong to carry on her usual routine of behavior, and she was borne away unresisting in her captor's triumph, with only a formal farewell to the most exciting experience of a lifetime.

Once in the carriage Mrs. Lawrence began: “What an appealing young man! If Mr. Cowan has such people about, he can hardly expect any of us to go again. Who was he?”

“His brother, I think.” Grace controlled a feeble wish to protest.

“Dearest child, and you sat and talked with him!” Mrs. Lawrence remonstrated. “Really, if you are so gentle and so perfect in your consideration for the feelings of others, you will be improving upon all your life.” Miss Atherton's rebelliousness went no further than an unvoiced conviction that this was certainly true in regard to her relations with Mrs. Lawrence. “But I do not think,” her mentor continued, “that anyone is bound to be civil to a person like that. Mr. Cowan cannot indulge in sentiment for his family's wishes to see us at his parties. You would have been fully justified in snubbing him and his impossible brother.”

Grace's mute antagonism grew stronger at every word. Why should Mrs. Lawrence venture to criticise her? she was not engaged to him yet. Some day he would doubtless ask her to marry him, and she was vaguely expected to say yes. With other suitors she had always known beforehand that the answer was to be no, and not feeling so convinced of the negative in this case, it was natural to conclude that she was not to be a Sussex for a husband. Now this terrible, volcanic young man had come and talked in a way that, while frightening and offending, had put all manner of wild ideas into her head. What if a man falling in love at first sight were an ordinary occurrence which she had heretofore just chanced to be outside of her personal experience? Not, as she had taken for granted, a sort of stage convention, but a thing as suitable to real life as opera recitative? Only a gusty, irresistible passion could have driven a stranger to such lengths.

course, she would never see him again, she should have curbed him more quickly; but it had been a thrilling episode, not devoid of sweetness, and she wished this horrid woman would let her meditate upon it in peace.

II.

HER hours being as closely scheduled as those of a royal princess, it was not till Miss Atherton was established in the train that she found leisure to meditate upon yesterday's extraordinary events. A tall footman gave her maid the checks and tickets, tipped two porters, adjusted footstools and blinds, then solicitously awaited starting-time on the station platform. As the train drew out of Jersey City snow fell in quick, powdery flakes. Grace watched it mechanically and thought of Sussex Lawrence, who had taken her in to dinner the night before. She had examined him attentively, for with Mrs. Lawrence already assuming the rights of a mother-in-law, it behooved her to be increasingly circumspect. For the first time she found her suitor flavorless. His distinguished appearance struck her as a trifle dry, and though what he said was always agreeable, she was suddenly conscious of knowing beforehand quite well what it was likely to be. The prickings of doubt were uncomfortable to Grace. Life had always been so smoothly adjusted as to spare her the crude effort of conscious choice, each action being the inevitable outcome of accepted conditions. She had never even known an unfulfilled wish, the cup having always been at her lips before she had quite reached the point of feeling thirsty. To-day things seemed strangely different. Failing to become interested in her book, she listened with a sense of wistful flatness to rather pronounced bursts of laughter from the smoking-compartment. The ball for which she was bound promised no special pleasure. As a penalty of wealth and the prominence of her family, she was too much like an official person ever to be permitted a mere girl's frivolous good time. Her very partners for to-night had been arranged weeks ago by a thoughtful hostess. They would send her flowers and show her every attention, but she would hardly differentiate one man from another. Rahway already! How it snowed! She was mentally yawning. The party of smokers seemed to be breaking up; several men, projecting a choking atmosphere of tobacco, passed through to the next car. One of these stopped at the vacant seat by hers. To save her life she could not help looking straight up into the friendly face of Mr. Sidney Cowan.

"Now, Miss Atherton," he began cheerfully, "shall I pretend this is a lucky chance or tell the truth? Better not do that, I guess. You were going to be pretty cross with me yesterday for being strictly truthful when your friend, the ice-wagon (excuse me; I've no doubt she is a perfectly lovely character), routed us out. However, she did one kind act when she put me on to your going by this train."

Grace said nothing, but this outcome of Mrs. Lawrence's interference made her taste all the joys of vengeance.

The young man went on: "I have been trying to break away from those fellows ever since we started to see if you were here, but there's no getting off from them till now."

Her continued silence seemed to stir a vague doubt, and he spoke with a certain hesitation.

"Penrose says I annoyed you yesterday and spoilt your afternoon. Now, it is up to you to decide. If he is right, just say the word, and back I go to sit alone in that den and repent of my sins. Otherwise, with your permission, I'll stay here and have the pleasure of looking at you while you give me a regular scolding."

"I certainly have no right either to scold you or to prohibit you from using your own seat, Mr. Cowan," Grace basely compromised.

The young man shook his head. "No, that won't do. Am I to go or to stay? Don't you see, I can't run the risk of stopping her from the sight of me is a nuisance to you."

Standing by his empty chair he looked dramatically penitent, and the exciting human relation, redolent of spice and warmth, taken for granted by him, contrasted agreeably with the tempered form of intercourse with which she was familiar. They were already nearing Trenton, time was growing short, and a safe retreat secured, as the Bradfords were to meet her in Philadelphia. It could never mean anything to her, and as for him, things seemed to have reached a pass where his feelings were bound to suffer whatever course she pursued. He made a gracious little gesture towards his vacant seat. The die was cast.

The next half hour proved full of perilous enchantment. Grace was reckless,—not, indeed, in her own speech, but in giving expression to what impressed her as a torrent of the most direct, irrepressible emotion making. The young man allowed her no time to think; keeping her within any bounds strained all her faculties. Suddenly, through the snow-coated window, she saw that their train had entered the Philadelphia station. In the scurry of collecting wraps, leaving the train and being welcomed by the Bradfords, even Mr. Cowan's efficient assistance could not compass much of a parting; as she had foreseen, they separated almost without a word of farewell.

III.

GRACE awoke at noon the next day with shadowy memories of a ball, of snow-blocked streets, and of an empty world. She hoped that Sussex Lawrence's proposal had been averted, at least for the time being. Fearing its approach, in the intervals between dances she had thrown up unwonted obstacles in his way, exerting herself to the point of actual flirtation with several of her allotted partners. These gentlemen

responded promptly enough in a restrained, innocuous fashion, and poor Grace was mortified to find herself craving something less insipid. She doubted if any of these men were capable of a sudden, overwhelming passion, much less of giving it free rein regardless of consequences. Her young blood was fired with a longing for change, for experiments, for ventures into a strange, new world, the very existence of which came as a revelation—a dangerous, alarming world, yet full of seduction. As she was far too timid for any sustained course along untried ways, these new sensations did not carry her beyond a determination to avoid a climax with Sussex Lawrence. Curiously enough, on the other hand, the evening's events had firmly decided Mr. Lawrence to settle matters at once. Seeing Grace so unlike herself, he intelligently divined that something had gone wrong, and very logically reasoned that she was resenting his slowness in declaring himself. His own idea would have been to become engaged in Holy Week and announce it at Easter. Then the wedding could be in June, and after two months abroad there would still be time for them to spend part of the season at Newport. A methodical soul, he disliked altering a well-laid plan, but infinitely preferred this trifling change to causing Grace one shadow of vexation.

After a late breakfast he prepared to sally forth from the hotel, and on ringing for a hansom was much taken aback to find that owing to the snow, which still fell steadily, not a street was open to carriages. The railroads were completely blocked, telephone and telegraph communication long since broken.

"They say we'll be storm-stayed here for a couple of days at least, sir," said his servant lugubriously; "it's a regular blizzard, sir."

The prospect of being housebound in a hotel was dismal to a man who had begun the day with a programme of being a happy lover before afternoon tea. Having made up his mind to act, Mr. Lawrence had scant patience for delays caused by the weather. Mrs. Bradford lived a short block from the hotel; he quite fancied the idea of ploughing through the drifts and giving his wayward lady this proof of courage and ardor. He arrived, snowy and breathless, causing a pleasant commotion in the Bradford household, where he was made much of and dried off before the blazing library fire. Mrs. Bradford excused herself for answering notes in his presence—her writing-room was unendurably cold. He and Grace were soon side by side on a sofa, somewhat remote from their hostess.

"Dear Grace," he began in a low tone, "I came to-day for a special purpose." Grace felt desperate. She hated the way he was going to look when she had said no, yet the even, obvious life he was offering hopelessly repelled her. She vaguely wished to live unmarried, now and again being warmed and cheered by lucky chance meetings with Mr. Sidney Cowan, who should be perpetually satisfied to regard her

as a distant loadstar. Mr. Lawrence continued: "You must know I mean, my dearest. Will——"

"Please, Madam,"—a trim buttons had entered the room,—is the only paper to be had to-day." He held out a damp sheet six scare-head columns.

"Very well, Brown," Mrs. Bradford spoke over her shoulder, turning around to add, "Give it to Miss Atherton." She laid down her pen. "Mr. Lawrence, could you come here for a minute? I am anxious for your advice about having this old miniature restored. It is a Malbone, and a good one. They say that you know of some wonderful person in New York. Why do you run off, Miss Atherton? (Poor Grace had moved towards the door, thinking to seek refuge in flight.) "This is the only warm place in the house."

Feeling the Fates against her, Grace glanced languidly at the paper and read, in screaming headlines:

"CUPID'S COURSE CUT SHORT BY CRUEL SNOW!

"GLEANINGS IN THE HOTEL LOBBIES!

"OUR REPORTER'S SPICY TALKS WITH BLIZZARD'S VICTIMS!

"Among the many wayfarers forcibly detained in this city by a blizzard whose dimensions dwarf Nansen's most perilous experiences none is more impatient to leave than Mr. Sidney Cowan, a gentleman equally famous in Washington business and social circles both as rising financier and for his reputation as the handsomest single man on the Atlantic City Boardwalk last summer. It is stated that Mr. Cowan vainly offered five thousand dollars to the Pennsylvania Railroad to run him a special engine as far as Baltimore before eight o'clock this evening. Mr. Cowan frankly confessed to our reporter that his reason for haste was a sentimental one. At that hour, in her father's home on Eutaw Street, Miss Belle Bosler, one of the Border City's loveliest daughters, is to assemble her family and friends to announce her betrothal to Mr. Sidney Cowan! Benedick is at last brought to book! The magnificent ring which he showed our——"

The paper dropped from Grace's nerveless fingers, the world whirled about her ears. Dazed, she looked up into her suitor's eyes. Eager to renew his wooing, he had returned unnoticed to her side. Now anxiously remarked her air of faintness. At the other end of the room Mrs. Bradford sat diligently writing; her back was to them. Mr. Lawrence took Miss Atherton's hand respectfully. "May this be mine," he asked, "for always, Grace?"

Shelter after the storm! Rest for the weary! Why had she dreamt of being fit to venture into an unknown, tricky world to make herself ridiculous? To be fooled, played with, all but disgraced! Thankful, she smiled up wanly into the safe, familiar

"If you wish it, Sussex!"

Miss Atherton had come home from her Wanderjahr.

HOW MISS TURKINGTON DID NOT SEE QUEEN VICTORIA

By Seumas MacManus

Author of "The Leadin' Road to Donegal," "The Bewitched Fiddle," etc.



IT was all because of that vexatious little, old Mrs. McIlraith. Miss Turkington and she had been friends five-and-fifty years: but they are friends no longer.

Both Miss Turkington and Mrs. McIlraith were eminently nice and genteel old ladies, with similar well-ordered tastes. Both of them were fond of old china, old songs, old music, old friends, and old servants. Both of them lived in little, old, quaint, and ivy-covered houses, hidden away from the public gaze by high hedges. Both of them entertained their select friends on alternate weeks with little teas, at which a little cake the recipes for which lingered only with themselves, and much gossip, were discussed. Both of them kept a store of gooseberry wine all the year round. And both of them went abroad dressed in black only.

But there was much disparity in their manner and great disparity in their size. Miss Turkington was remarkably tall, and carried herself with a stiff erectness that strongly suggested hauteur. Mrs. McIlraith was small, and had, besides, a droop in her shoulders, and carried with her everywhere a conciliating look. Miss Turkington was eminently self-reliant, and Mrs. McIlraith very dependent. Miss Turkington was, as you have presumed, a spinster. Mrs. McIlraith was a widow of thirty years' standing.

Moreover,—and herein lay the great disparity,—Miss Turkington had been and seen Queen Victoria; Mrs. McIlraith had never been so blessed!

Yes, Miss Turkington, then a young lady in her bloom, had gone to Dublin with her parents in '61, and seen with her own eyes (henceforward blessed) Queen Victoria. When, yet, she gave a state tea, she set before her guests the very teaset which she purchased on that day of hallowed memory, and she treated them for the hundred-and-some-oddth time to an account of how she had seen the Queen, with detailed

particulars of the shade, quality, and design of every article of dress displayed.

And when she repeated this story for the hundred-and-some-odd time little Mrs. McIlraith hearkened with the same rapt attention which she had listened to it for the first. And then too, for the hundred-and-some-oddth time, little Mrs. McIlraith looked upon Miss Turkington with eyes of envy.

And in 1900 the joyous news came to Dungannon, and to the table of Miss Turkington, that Queen Victoria had again consented to visit her "faithful Irish subjects" (so the London newspaper men called it), and would arrive in Dublin in the beginning of April.

"And," said Miss Turkington, after bestowing the glad tidings on her guests, "I am (D. V.) going up to Dublin to refresh these eyes with one other sight of the dear old Queen: then I'll die happy, whensoever it shall please God to call me. Mrs. McIlraith, I'll fetch you with me to see your Queen," she added with the air of one who knew all about it, "it was done."

Then poor Mrs. McIlraith was nigh overcome with gratitude and delight, and, with tears of joy streaming down her countenance, she ran to her feet and hugged Miss Turkington before the company.

In good time Miss Turkington pre-engaged rooms for herself and Mrs. McIlraith, and likewise a window along the processional route. And on the eve of the visit she and Mrs. McIlraith (who had slept in the room a little for a week before) arrived in Dublin, and having seen their rooms and dined, and visited their hired window and approved of it, took the train for Kingstown.

"For, my dear Mrs. McIlraith," Miss Turkington said, "you must come with me to see the *very spot* upon which our beloved Queen landed in '61, and the *very spot* on which our still beloved Queen shall, I am willing, stand to-morrow."

Arrived at Kingstown, they went and did due honor to the *very spot* on which their beloved Queen landed forty years before, and to the *very spot* on which their still beloved Queen would land on the morrow. Mrs. McIlraith was rather more of a trial to Miss Turkington than the latter had anticipated. Under ordinary circumstances Mrs. McIlraith was nervous and timid; but in a strange place, and the busy, bustling, noisy, crowded centre, such as Mrs. McIlraith had never before experienced, she was doubly and trebly nervous and vacillating. And, unlucky as such people always are, no sooner would Miss Turkington have rescued her from imminent death in the form of a passing tram, than she had to extricate her from among the feet of a pair of coach-horses; and when she hopped from the destruction that flew over her head in a handcart the arms of a drayman only saved her from a surer death.

Miss Turkington, as quickly as possible, hurried her friend back

the point from which they should take their departure. As there was no immediate sign of a tram, Miss Turkington, wishing to purchase an article in bog-oak which, in a window round the corner, had struck her eye and her fancy, asked Mrs. McIlraith to remain whilst she ran off to make the purchase. She warned Mrs. McIlraith not to move from the spot on her peril. And Mrs. McIlraith promised, and, indeed, intended to keep her promise, only a man came along, who, standing to wait for a tram likewise, began to stare at her (she fancied), so, to get rid of him, she walked in the direction Miss Turkington had gone, assured that she would now meet that lady coming back.

But Mrs. McIlraith walked, without meeting her friend, much farther than she had intended, and turned a couple of corners, looking in vain for the particular bog-oak shop. Then in alarm she endeavored to retrace her steps, but though she wandered and poked about in keen distress, it was half-an-hour before she found (with a policeman's help) the waiting-place again, and when she did find it there was no Miss Turkington there. And though she remained on the spot for another half-hour no Miss Turkington came. Poor Mrs. McIlraith was now in a woful state of alarm. Concluding that Miss Turkington must have supposed her gone to Dublin and followed after, she at length took the tram for Dublin also, and it was only as she entered the city that her very mixed-up faculties suggested to her the question, "Where am I going to?" She didn't know the hotel; she didn't know the street; she didn't even know the quarter of the city. She had heard Miss Turkington give the name of the street to the cabman when they were leaving the Great Northern Terminus, and she heard her name the hotel several times. And though, in a place where strange names and strange things were crowding her, she had given only passing attention to the name of the hotel, she might still have recalled or recognized it with a little effort if she had had her faculties clear. But with the poor woman they were, just then, only about as clear as ditch-water after a downpour.

When the tram conductor asked her where she wanted to be left off she stared at him; and when he repeated his question she said, "Oh, man, I don't know." He whistled and went away.

At the monument in O'Connell Street he helped her down from the car and whispered to a policeman that this was a poor old lady who seemed to be wandering in her mind and required looking after. To the questioning policeman Mrs. McIlraith could not give any very clear account of herself—and, indeed, very few straight answers to his questions—further than to inform him that she and a friend were stopping at some hotel; and though he named every hotel he could think of in the city, she shook her head at each of them, not recognizing any of them as that at which they had engaged rooms. And the further he

catechised her, the more dazed did she become. At length, as she seemed about to get faint, he, with a comrade's help, carried her into a doctor's. Of three or four people who pressed forward to get a peep at her, by a most happy chance she was instantly recognized by one Colonel Sterne, of Saltown—a suburb of Dublin which is widely known because of its private asylum for the insane. This Colonel Sterne and his wife were old friends of Miss Turkington's, at whose tea-table was the occasion of many visits to Dungannon, they had often met Mrs. McIlraith. And he had just recently changed his residence from Glasnevin to Saltown. So the Colonel, whom she in turn recognized, persuaded her to place herself in his charge, he taking her home to live with them at Saltown whilst search would be making for Miss Turkington. Then he wired to the District Inspector of Police in Dungannon, asking him to endeavor to procure from any of Miss Turkington's friends the address of the hotel at which she was staying in Dublin, adding that he had charge of her companion, Mrs. McIlraith. Then the Colonel waited impatiently for a reply all the remainder of the evening, he got none, for the District Inspector of Police was absent, and only received the telegram by the following morning's post, whereupon he hastened back to Dungannon with all possible speed in order to make the necessary inquiries.

Now, when Miss Turkington, just a few minutes after Mrs. McIlraith quitted it, returned to the place where she had left her friend and found her gone she was as much annoyed as alarmed, and as alarmed as annoyed. She waited and walked about for some time, but as still there was no sign of Mrs. McIlraith, and as, moreover, a police inspector informed her that he observed a little lady of the description supplied by Miss Turkington boarding a Dublin-bound tram some time previous, Miss Turkington concluded that Mrs. McIlraith had taken a huff at being left alone in the public street, and, refusing to follow, had gone to Dublin and to the hotel. Consequently, after a reasonable delay, she too took a tram and proceeded to the city. But when she reached her hotel and found that Mrs. McIlraith had not shown up there she took fright, which increased each succeeding minute as she waited there and found not any sign of Mrs. McIlraith arriving. Then, after creating much alarm in the hotel, thinking it more probable that she had left her friend behind her in Kingstown, she rushed out and away to observe the trams arriving from Kingstown. But after two weary, fruitless hours of this she wended her way back to the hotel again, worn and forlorn and sick at heart. As she expected there was not any word of Mrs. McIlraith at the hotel either; and after a further deliberation with friends in the hotel, it was concluded that Mrs. McIlraith had left Kingstown in a pout, that (stupid body as she was) she had forgotten the very name of the hotel, thus increas-

her pout and vexation, and so she had driven to the railway station and taken train for home.

And though the conclusion seemed the most plausible, Miss Turkington slept no wink all that night, but tossed feverishly in bed, trying to get away from the haunting thought that all those hours Mrs. McIlraith might still be trudging through the dreary streets of Dublin, or the drearier ones of Kingstown.

As soon as the post-office opened in the morning Miss Turkington was there, dispatching a telegram to Dungannon to find if Mrs. McIlraith had arrived home safely. And quickly came back the answer that nothing had been seen or heard of Mrs. McIlraith since both of them had together quitted Dungannon.

When this telegram was handed to her in her apartments in the hotel, poor Miss Turkington's distress was so extreme that she sank upon the bed and gave way to tears of mingled misery and vexation. But she got worse when, two hours later, a second telegram came, this time from the District Inspector of Police, requesting her to hurry to Bagshot House, Saltown, whither (the wire stated) Mrs. McIlraith had been taken.

When Miss Turkington heard that her friend had been taken to Saltown she (naturally) fainted, and it took all the efforts of all the maids to aid her recovery. And when she had recovered she was helped into a cab, the driver of which she ordered to hasten to the private asylum at Saltown. When after forty-five minutes' agony she reached that institution she announced that she was the particular friend of the old lady, Mrs. McIlraith, who had been taken here yesterday, informed the matron that there really could not be anything the matter with Mrs. McIlraith's mind beyond a temporary confusion or wandering, the cause of which was easily explained, and begged to be permitted to see her unfortunate friend at once.

"But, Madam, do you not think you make a mistake?" the matron queried. "There was no lady patient, old or young, admitted here yesterday. Nor have we anyone of that name in the house."

"Isn't this," said Miss Turkington, "the Saltown Private Asylum for the Insane?"

The matron admitted it was.

"Bagshot House?" Miss Turkington queried.

"No," said the matron, "Bagshot House is a private residence five minutes down the way."

"Oh, my!" said poor Miss Turkington, throwing up her hands appealingly, "oh, my!"

In her confusion she did not even offer apology or explanation to the matron, whom she left standing there in bewilderment as she trotted again to her cab.

When she arrived at Bagshot House and was met by Mrs. McIlraith who came through the hall to meet her, both old ladies fainted right, giving the Colonel and his lady and the servants a busy laying them out and resuscitating them. And when, after trouble and anxiety, they were brought to their senses, they just at each other and went off into a faint again. Altogether the party fainted three times in Bagshot House. And when they were finally quite restored, the account (from an evening special) of Victoria's entry into Dublin was read by the Colonel to two who listened thereto with disappointed and bitter hearts.

Next morning when Miss Turkington had settled her hotel bill and paid a round sum for two windows in Grafton Street (windows vacated at the passing of Queen Victoria, were conspicuously vacant), Miss Turkington led Mrs. McIlraith to the railway station and took her for Dungannon, where travelling they exchanged few words—and few neither sweet nor amiable.

And one year and eight months elapsed ere Mrs. McIlraith saw Miss Turkington's tea-table or Miss Turkington smiled upon Mrs. McIlraith again.



THE SEA AT NOON

BY MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN

WHO rocks the little billows of the deep,
 That, curved as grace itself, they kiss the air;
 Then sink in curves, and with the noon-day
 The stillness that can neither laugh nor weep?
 What languid revels do the sea-nymphs keep
 That, in the summer, when the days are fair,
 They slowly to the sky cast garlands rare
 Of foam-flowers, though the blue seems fixed in sleep?

Always the joy of life lies in the sea,—
 Who knows it, loves it, and his fancies play
 With all its moods for joy,—whether it wakes
 Gentle as dawn upon the bright To Be
 Of rosy youth; or, dashing high its spray,
 The world with ecstasy of tumult shakes.

THE BRIBING OF THE SENATOR

By Josephine Dixon



OLD Mrs. Higgins put the dish of fried apples in the centre of the table. She drew up a chair for Hiram and another for herself. She wiped her mouth with her apron, concealing as best she could the removal of her false plate. Calling her husband from the woodshed, she waited, with her eyes fixed anxiously on the plate of apples, until he appeared. When he was seated at the head of the table she motioned him to say grace.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow," said the old man solemnly; "praise Him for these bounties; praise Him for our good appetites; praise Him for our good digestion, and, oh Lord, make us use our strength for Thy glorification, and if it be Thy will, put it into the hearts of the legislators of our country to allow our claim, for Christ's sake. Amen."

"Amen," echoed the woman.

She passed the dish of apples to him, and he helped himself to about a shovelful. One or two long strings fell on the clean cloth, and he scraped them up with his knife and conveyed them to his mouth. Mrs. Higgins filled her plate, and, leaning well over the table, ate industriously.

"Clarissy," said the old man, licking his lips, "everything you cook has a flavor. Now I know that down there at the New Willurd these here apples wouldn't taste any better than so much tanbark."

Mrs. Higgins passed him an affectionate glance, while she struggled with an elusive section of peeling, half of which she had already captured in her mouth.

"Oh, that's the way you allus talk," she said when she had succeeded in making the entire spiral a prisoner. "Some men would think as they had good cause to complain ef they had nothin' but fried apples for dinner."

"Shuh," commented the old man.

His wife reflected a few minutes, and then, with her knife poised in midair, she said,—

"Don't fill yourself too full, Hiram; we have dessert."

Mr. Higgins made no sign of having seen it cooling on the chopping-block as he came in from the woodshed.

"You don't say!" he remarked in an astonishment that made Mrs. Higgins, even, a little suspicious. "You don't say! Do tell!"

She put away her distrust and smiled at him as tenderly as the absence of her false teeth would allow.

"Guess," she said.

Her husband looked bewildered.

"Sliced apples with sugar?"

Mrs. Higgins was pained.

"You know we haven't had any sugar for a week."

"Well, sliced apples without sugar."

She shook her head.

"Apple dumplings?"

"You have to have flour for them. Seems as if you men think flour and sugar comes down like manna."

"Give it up."

Mrs. Higgins waited to see if he would not make another attempt but he refused.

"Baked apples," she announced, and waited for the fulness of surprise to bear in on him.

He did not disappoint her, and when she had brought him a plate and an unsweetened baked apple he consumed it with a delicacy that would have furnished inspiration to any cook. When his plate was quite cleared, and he had even pursued the last drops of juice with his limber steel knife, he pushed back his chair and balanced himself on its back legs.

"I ironed your collar," said Mrs. Higgins, anticipating his objection, "and I brushed your clothes and laid them out. Ef you go out by the back gate and keep close to the fence, you'll not get your shoes muddy. I wouldn't like you to be seen at the Capitol with muddy shoes."

Mr. Higgins felt called upon for a little masculine disdain, but his sonorous sniff was too kindly to rankle.

"I've been going over the ground again," he remarked after a pause, "and I'm pretty sure ef we get the claim, it'll mean not only the money, but a good stretch of land down as far as the creek."

"Enough for chickens?" asked his wife a little breathlessly.

"Shuh,—chickens and a cow thrown in. But I must be off. When a man's got business at the Nation's Capitol, he ain't no time for dilly-dallying with womenfolks. It's a good hour to the trolley and another to the Capitol."

When he appeared a few minutes later with slick wet hair, in shabby black, store-made clothes, his boots reeking with the castor-oil used to make them waterproof, his wife viewed the caricature of her husband and gave a sigh of ecstatic admiration.

"I jest feel sure you'll succeed," was the feminine tribute paid to his beauty.

Then she took out of her apron two large apples she had gathered from the tree that took up more than half of their front yard.

"I thought as likely you might get hungry before you came back, and so I picked the two finest ones."

The man took them and stuffed them in his pocket.

"That's jest like you, Clarissy, allus thinkin' of me an' my comfort. Well, so long."

Senator Fenton was pacing the corridors of the Capitol in an agony of suspense. He had his hands buried deep in his pockets and his face drawn into a network of anxious lines. He passed members of the House and Senate alike without a sign of recognition.

"Fenton looks dead beat, don't he?" remarked one Representative to another as they passed him in the rotunda and turned to look after him. "Poor devil, he takes it hard."

A bareheaded boy approached the Senator. He glanced around as if he would have been glad to give someone else the opportunity of interrupting the man's absorbing reverie.

"A—ah—a man to see you, Senator. Higgins, I think he calls himself."

The Senator looked at him a few seconds before he gathered the meaning of his words; then he turned and slowly retraced his steps towards the Senate.

"I'll see him in the marble room," he said wearily.

Mr. Higgins, perspiring freely, presented his claim. When he had finished his story he waited for a response. He waited patiently, easing himself first on one squeaking boot and then the other. He wondered vaguely if the Senator was deaf, or if these were the ways of greatness. After a time the Senator looked in his direction and seemed surprised to see him. He drew down his brows in an effort to remember the man's business. Then he looked at the bulging pockets of the figure in front of him.

"You have your papers with you?" he asked tentatively.

Mr. Higgins followed the glance, and his hand sought his pocket.

"No, sir," he said, drawing out an apple in each hand. "Senator Harmon has my papers. It was him who told me to see you. If you would be so good, sir, as to speak to him about it, I think as how you would see I had told you only the truth."

The Senator nodded and looked towards the door, and the old man understood the invitation. He would have gone quickly, but he was hampered by the social requirement of making a farewell. His lips hung on his dry teeth. His boots were squeaking an anthem of uneasiness. The apples were still in his hand, and he pushed one out towards the Senator as his voice returned to him.

"They've taken the prize at every county fair for ten years," he

stammered. "Would you take one—maybe you'd like it—or if you have a child—children like the flag-red color of 'em——"

The Senator extended his hand and relieved the old man of his apple.

"It is a fine one," he said, with the first gleam of interest in his manner.

When Senator Fenton reached home a trained nurse in white apron and cap met him at the door of the child's room.

"Be careful not to excite her," she warned. "Try not to let her see that you are worried."

The man crept into the room. The child lay under the covers, her face was scarcely lifted by her tiny, emaciated figure. Her face was turned towards the wall, but she heard his step and asked in a whisper,—

"Is that you, Daddy?"

She motioned with her finger, and with tender hands he lifted her and turned her towards the light.

"Shall I tell you about the little girl that fell into the well?"

Her eyelids fluttered and she closed her eyes.

"I am so tired," she whispered.

Tears rose in the man's eyes, but he forced them back.

"Or Beauty and the Beast?"

"I am so tired," she whispered again.

The nurse came in with a glass feeding-cup filled with milk. The child, seeing it, broke into feeble crying.

"Just a little," coaxed the nurse. The father added an appeal.

"O Daddy, I can't, I can't!" she sobbed. "Make her take it away."

The Senator and the nurse exchanged discouraged glances, and then followed her to the door.

"Has she taken nothing to-day?"

"Absolutely nothing," replied the woman. "We dare not excite her by forcing her to take it. The rectal feeding and the hypodermic exhaust her almost as much as they strengthen her. Unless she can take food normally—into her stomach—unless we can stimulate her appetite, I am afraid—that is, the Doctor says——"

He did not wait to hear the end of the sentence. He had heard enough before, and his own observation was enough to feed his sharpest fears. He returned to the bed, and the child looked at him gratefully.

"Thank you, Daddy," and then again the murmur, "I am so tired," that seemed burned into his brain.

A little saliva trickled from between her relaxed lips. He reached into his pocket for a handkerchief, and his hand touched the ap-

that the old man had given him. When he had wiped her lips he showed it to her.

"Look, honey!" he exclaimed, with a brave assumption of cheer, "did you ever see such a big apple?"

She opened her eyes and looked at it wearily.

"See, it is so red—just as red as the stripes of a flag—and see, when I throw it up, it looks like a toy balloon."

Her glance followed it weakly as it coursed towards the ceiling. The man, rejoicing at this sign of interest, did as many strange things with it as his imagination admitted. It passed behind his back and came out of unexpected pockets or from under the bedcovers; once, even, it came from beneath her pillow, and she gave a little gasp of pleasure as its cool cheek touched hers. The Senator, grateful almost to tears for the curiously acquired toy, noticed at last that as the apple came near her face her little, swollen tongue touched her lips. It surprised him for an instant, but the idea seemed too improbable, and he continued to play with it and watch with delighted hope the child's appreciation. At last she motioned him, and he bent his ear towards her.

"Does it taste good, Daddy?" she asked.

He took a knife from the table and peeled the apple. With the blade he scraped up a spoonful of the pulp. She opened her mouth and he put it on her tongue.

"This is our secret, birdie," he said. "If nurse knew, I am afraid she would discharge us. A little more? well, well. Not too much, honey—some more after awhile. Well, just a tiny bit, and to-morrow morning I'll come as soon as it is light,—sooner, then,—and you shall have some more."

That night while the nurse was dozing the child startled her by asking for something to eat.

Senator Fenton was in the barber-shop waiting his turn to be shaved when a Southern colleague took the seat beside him.

"By Jove, Fenton," he said, "I can't tell you how glad I am that the little one has pulled through. They tell me she looks as fine as a fiddle—racing about everywhere and good for a hundred years."

The Senator's voice had a way of getting tangled when the child was mentioned. He took his friend's hand in both of his and wrung it painfully.

"Yes, yes," he answered, when he had swallowed the tangles, "she's all right—good as new. It was a hard struggle, though, and God knows how I ever endured it. I tell you, Burton, many a night I've sat with one of her little, blue hands in mine and a pistol beside me, and—well, it doesn't sound heroic, but I'd have used it when the

tiny fingers unclasped. You see, she cost me her mother, and when a man at my age begins to love things, it isn't so easy to let go."

Burton shifted about in his chair, embarrassed, as men ever do when another shows his soul.

"There isn't much of anything that can stand out against modern methods in medicine, is there?" he asked.

Fenton paused before he answered.

"Modern methods of medicine are all right. Doctor Johnson and the rest of them say I owe the child's life to saline solutions and some sort of thing. Maybe they're right. I'm disposed to think, though, that the human system is less of a known quantity than the average practitioner thinks it is, and that medicine is pretty far from an exact science yet. There was a time when it seemed as if a few bites of a ripe apple had pulled her through a crisis, but, of course, the doctors hoot the notion, and I'm far from willing to make an assertion that the faculty would find so incredible."

The barber motioned him to a seat. When his face was covered with lather and only one side had been cleaned smooth the electric from the Senate set up a furious ringing. Senator Burton, still waiting for his shave, uttered an impatient exclamation.

"Quorum wanted and a damned batch of bills that nobody cares anything about," he said disgustedly. "A lot of little claims—and, besides, anyway, did you ever see that old fellow named Higgins that eats apples?"

The barber nearly tumbled over backward as Fenton jumped out of the chair and, wiping the lather off of the unshaved side of his face, dashed out without a word of explanation. Burton looked after him wonderingly, and as he took the vacated chair he remarked,—

"The Senator seemed to think there was a hurry."

In the Senate there was something of a struggle over the passage of a few little claims, but they finally slid through by one vote.

The same evening Senator Fenton, driving with his little son, found it convenient to take a road that led out across the long bridge into an adjoining county of Virginia. In the dusk they made out the little house by the large apple-tree that nearly filled the tiny, fenced-in yard.

When Hiram and Clarissy heard the glorious news they fell into each other's arms and wept together.

"We'll have chickens and a cow," sobbed the woman, and the man trumpeted in a vain effort to suppress his emotion. Fenton's eyes too were swimming, but when the couple turned towards the altar, calling down all the benefactions of Heaven upon him for his good fortune, he waved them aside.

"There's no credit coming to me," he laughed. "My vote was bought and paid for in advance."

THREE LETTERS AND A NOTE

By Albertine Crandall



TAKEN FROM A PACKAGE OF LETTERS FOUND IN THE ESCRITOIRE OF
MISS EDITH RALSTON

"SAN FRANCISCO, January 24, 1901.

"MY DEAREST ONE: Just one week ago to-night I was bidding you good-by in New York; now three thousand miles divide us. When I look forward to the long, weary months of waiting before I can go for you they seem endless. Will they ever creep by? To keep up my courage I am continually repeating, 'January, February, March, April; January, February, March, April.' And then,—May and *You*. What a beautiful bride you'll be, Edith, and, please God, a happy one, if a man's love and devotion count for aught. I can see you now as you'll look on our wedding-day, all gowned in white, your hair like satin, your eyes like stars. I am glad your hair is dark, Edith, for no real reason except an absurd fancy that the people who have light hair are not always to be trusted. Speaking of blondes reminds me of George's guest and her strange story; also that my purpose in writing this evening isn't merely to tell you how much I love you,—that would be impossible,—but to fulfil my promise—to write you just how, where, and with whom I have passed my time since I left you.

"If my numerous notes reached their destination, you know how deadly uninteresting the overland journey was, and how correspondingly enthusiastic I became when George boarded the train at Sixteenth Street. While crossing the bay we held a regular Harvard post-mortem, ending, as in 'ye olden times,' with an argument. 'Just like you,' do I hear you say? What else could be expected of two lawyers? Our argument was over where I was to live. As usual, George won; for though I preferred staying at a hotel, he wouldn't listen to it. He said, as the senior member of the new law firm of Bell & Belmont, *his* wishes were the first to be considered, and a lot more nonsense, until I, as the junior member of the aforesaid illustrious firm, conceded the point, and the court adjourned to meet later at 1602 Broadway,—George's residence,—where I shall stay for the present. Already, in

the two days I have been here, they've made me feel at home; so perhaps it's best that I came, for God knows it will be lonely enough anywhere without you!

"The Bells are a most interesting family. George you have met; Mrs. George is a rosy-cheeked, matronly looking lady with a kind heart and charming manners; the two children—a boy and a girl—are animated interrogation points. 'Have you a pretty lady in your watch—Ted says so—have you? Is she your sweetheart? Why don't you marry her, like papa did mamma?' were among their first questions. Madge Dargie—the guest—is fair, petite, and rather pretty—under gaslight. As she and her mother are clients of George's, or, as he kindly puts it, 'of ours,' the young woman's history may interest you. Educated in a convent, when seventeen years old Miss Dargie married a worthless rake of a fellow in direct opposition to her mother's wishes. For two years she led a wretched existence. Six months ago she obtained a divorce, when, by a decree of the court, she resumed her maiden name. Soon afterwards the ex-husband renewed his love-making. To prevent a re-marriage Mrs. Dargie took her daughter away from Santa Barbara, where all the interested parties reside, to some Springs in the northern part of the State. There they remained in comparative quiet—barring the fact that a young man who was staying at the Springs developed a most persistent fondness for Miss Dargie's society—until Mrs. Dargie was called home on business. Not wishing, under the circumstances, to leave her daughter at the Springs, Mrs. Dargie brought her to San Francisco, where, after placing her in George's care, she left for Santa Barbara, promising to return in one week. That was two weeks ago. George says, 'Playing chaperon isn't what it is cracked up to be.' I can see he is tired of the responsibility and will be glad when the mother returns.

"But enough of this old woman's gossip. What an interminably long, prosy letter this is, to be sure, and all about three or four people. However, should it bore you, remember it's partially your fault for insisting that everyone I might meet would interest you. Never mind, dear; after a little I shall know more people and gather more experiences to write about. Meanwhile what does it matter when we love each other—nothing else counts. Good-night, sweetheart, sweet dreams. Now and forever, your

"ROY."

"SAN FRANCISCO, February 27, 1901.

"MY DEAREST: How I longed for you Saturday—not that my longing is intermittent, but that day I took a long walk out to the Presidio Heights, where a great many houses are being built, and selected our home. That is, it shall be ours if you like it as well as I do after see-

ing the plans. One great advantage is that, as the house is not yet completed, you can make your own selections for the interior finishing; another—but I won't enumerate—you can judge for yourself from the photographs and plans which I enclose. What pleasure we'll take together setting up our household gods! I can hardly wait when I think of sitting down three times a day—for I shall come home to luncheon—at our own dining-table—just we two—in front of a big bay-window which overlooks the Golden Gate, with Tamalpais in the distance. The view, with the blue bay in the foreground, is magnificent; you will love it. As for me, I shall be more in love with a certain little lady who will be sitting opposite me. Do you know her? February, March, April! You see, I am still counting.

"Thank you for liking my drawings of the office. I feel flattered, knowing that Nature never intended me for a draughtsman. As you suggested, I moved the roller-top desk nearer the east window and pulled the revolving bookcase out from the corner. The light is better. It takes a woman to arrange things, after all, even if she is at the other side of the continent and has to do her arranging by proxy. Eh, sweetheart?

"By the way, I've been proxying for George lately in the capacity of watch-dog and general utility man, much to his secret amusement. George is an A No. 1 fellow, but he has one fault: he can't say 'No.' Instead, he invariably promises to do whatever people ask of him and, when it suits him, as invariably turns the job over to someone else. When I first arrived he began by enlisting my sympathies in Miss Dargie's behalf, gradually getting into the habit of asking me to do this and that errand for her until—presto!—before I realized it I became the one she asked favors of, not George. Confound him!

"Truly it has been a long five weeks doing my duty without you, and I confess I am not sorry that Mrs. Dargie arrives this afternoon. She is to meet her daughter here in the office, as she telephoned that on no account was Madge to be allowed to go to the train. Two nights ago Mr. Gray, the ex-husband, forced his way into Mrs. Dargie's presence, and a terrible scene ensued because she refused to tell him where her daughter was. Madge fainted when we told her about it, but Mrs. George, with rare presence of mind, seized the water-pitcher, and a liberal sprinkling of water soon revived her. Actually Mrs. George looked as if she enjoyed baptizing the poor girl; she doesn't like Miss Dargie, you know, and is constantly misunderstanding her. As for me, I can't help feeling sorry for her. She certainly needs her mother, for she is altogether too young to be alone.

"You ask if the young man from the Springs is as much in evidence as ever. More so; at least the stream of theatre tickets, candy, and flowers has flowed steadily on ever since his arrival in San Fran-

cisco. Mrs. George says he is too nice a boy and too much in love to be played with and then thrown aside; that's what she thinks Miss Dargie is doing, and she may be right, for there are numerous mysterious telegrams and telephones arriving daily. George insists that they emanate from Mr. Gray, and that it will only be a question of time before Miss Dargie returns to her first love. Heigh-ho, women are queer creatures, and to mere stupid man incomprehensible! Excuse me, dear, won't you? I don't mean *all* women.

"Mrs. Dargie has just arrived. I can hear her now in George's private office. There's a perfect babel of tongues. Every one seems to be talking at once. I wish they'd leave me out of it. But they won't; Miss Dargie's wants have become chronic. What is a man to do under the circumstances? He can't be a boor. George is calling me through the speaking-tube. Dearest, that means that I must say good-bye for this time, and I haven't even said—I love you. Now, as always, your

"ROY."

"SAN FRANCISCO, March 29, 1901.

"DEAREST: What did you imagine my last letter meant? Surely the March winds must have been playing sad havoc with your fancy, for I never intimated that I desired to control your actions any more than you have—or ever will, I hope—desire to control mine. Why should I? We are both free agents. Does the fact of the existence of our engagement give either one of us the right to pass judgment upon the other? No; for, as individuals possessing differing personalities, how can we grasp each other's point of view? As lovers—ah, that's a different story! Then, we forget and forgive.

"You say, 'Write me all about your clients and cases.' Don't I, always? My letters are so full of my work and the people I am working for that sometimes I'm ashamed of them; still, I ramble on, secure in the thought that you will understand. In the case of *Stone vs. Rock*, which I wrote you was on the calendar for the third week in March, you will rejoice with me that a fifty-thousand-dollar verdict was given the plaintiff—our client. The Brown trial comes on to-morrow. George was to have summed up the case, but he's had no time to look over the evidence, and I get the last chance at the jury. Poor George! There may be advantages in having wealthy clients who depend absolutely upon their lawyer for everything from a monetary standpoint, but from a purely personal one the disadvantages more than counter-balance.

"For the past month, ever since Mrs. Dargie's return, neither she nor her daughter has scarcely dared move without consulting George. The last few days have been unusually exciting, which accounts for the

brief note I wrote you Sunday. A friend telephoned from Santa Barbara stating that Mr. Gray had started for San Francisco, threatening to kill both Mrs. Dargie and Madge. At that, Mrs. Dargie asked George to inform the Chief of Police, and the ladies' apartments at the Palace have since assumed some of the characteristics of an army post. A ferret-eyed, undersized detective does triple duty as commandant, sentry, and striker, while the role of scout is alternately filled by George, the young man from the Springs, and myself—when it can't be helped. So far we haven't succeeded in locating Mr. Gray, though we've had all the trains from the South watched. We think he didn't come; but the ladies are positive he is in the city, hiding, lying in wait for them. Meanwhile the young man from the Springs, who is a fine fellow and desperately in love, urges immediate marriage, pleading that if Madge is once his wife, he will have the right to protect her. Mrs. Dargie, fearing a possible reconciliation between her daughter and Mr. Gray, approves of the marriage if it can be carried out,—the laws of this State requiring one year to elapse after divorce is granted before either party can remarry,—but Madge objects.

"I was called away just then by a telephone from Mrs. Dargie. She said that George had found an old clergyman friend who was willing to perform the ceremony—they were to charter a tug and go out to sea—if only they could gain Madge's consent. Would I come over at once to the hotel and add my influence—which she was kind enough to say was considerable—to theirs towards hastening the marriage? How could I refuse? Well, I went and found Mrs. Dargie alone. She had grown thin and pale. Somehow my manner must have told her I was sorry for her. In that, and that alone, before God, Edith, was I to blame for what followed. After we had shaken hands I briefly stated my errand. Although she was extremely nervous, she did not speak until I had finished; then she walked over to the window and looked out a moment. When she turned—so innocent, so childlike, so helpless—it made my heart ache to see her.

"'You say that my marriage will simplify matters?' she asked. 'That it will be best for me—for my mother, who has done so much for me? I should do as she wishes? That is your advice?'

I bowed affirmatively.

"'Even if I don't love the man?' and then, before I could answer, she added, coming close, and gazing at me as if she would look me through and through, 'If—if it were—you—'

"Edith, upon my honor, I never was so at a loss for words. I couldn't think. The only thing to do was to come away.

"George, who has since joined me at the office, says they found her in a swoon. They didn't know what had passed between us, but as she

has promised to marry the young man from the Springs day after to-morrow they think that I influenced her. Perhaps I did. I have told George that I will not be a witness at the marriage ceremony, but I did not tell him why.

"Oh, if you were only near me! If ever I've needed you, it has been this past month and now—now, Edith! Why aren't you here?"

"ROY."

"HOTEL RAFAEL, April 3, 1901.

"To Miss Edith Ralston.

"I enclose a newspaper clipping that will tell you all. I don't know how it happened,—but it's done. God forgive me! I'm a brute!

"ROYAL BELMONT.

"'MARRIED at sea, April 2, 1901, by Rev. Abel Abercrombie, Royal D. Belmont, of New York City, to Margaret Dargie, of Santa Barbara, California. Boston and New York papers please copy.'"



SUMMER IN THE SOUTH

BY PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

THE oriole sings in the greening grove
 As if he were half-way waiting,
 The rosebuds peep from their hoods of green,
 Timid and hesitating.
 The rain comes down in a torrent sweep
 And the nights smell warm and piney,
 The garden thrives, but the tender shoots
 Are yellow-green and tiny.
 Then a flash of sun on a waiting hill,
 Streams laugh that erst were quiet,
 The sky smiles down with a dazzling blue
 And the woods run mad with riot



REBIRTH

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

WHAT of those songs the poet leaves unsung?
 Do they go forth with him on Death's long trail?
 So once I dreamed, until my heart was wrung
 By the sad singing of a nightingale!

THE MENDACITY OF MR. RIGGS

By C. Yarnall Abbott



WHEN Mr. Hector Montgomery Riggs awakened suddenly at the chilly and mournful hour of three A.M. it was with the distinct feeling that something was wrong. This feeling became a certainty as he opened his eyes in the dim light cast by the street-lamp outside. Before the open drawer of his handsome dressing-table stood a man engaged in deftly and almost noiselessly going through its contents.

Though Mr. Riggs had not consciously moved, his visitor seemed instantly aware of his awakening, for he turned and regarded him intently.

The burglar was a small man, slim and slightly built,—not at all the typical midnight marauder,—but the situation was sufficiently startling, nevertheless.

"Wh—what are you doing there?" demanded Mr. Riggs quite unnecessarily. His tone was not, perhaps, as peremptory as it might have been, but allowances must be made for the nerves of a quiet, middle-aged gentleman so suddenly awakened.

"What the h—— do you think?" responded the burglar genially. He changed his position slightly and resumed his occupation, keeping, the while, an eye on his unwilling host.

"What do you mean, sir? This is an outrage! Leave this house at once! I shall call the police!" cried the latter. He had overcome the unfortunate tendency of his voice to tremble and felt that he was handling this difficult situation rather well.

"Look er here!" said the burglar, "you've got to cut that out, see? If yer don't talk, yer won't get hurt, but if yer bother me I'll knock yer d——d bald head off, see?" He produced a small but unpleasant-looking weapon, made of black leather with a lump at the end, and laid it before him, then resumed the inspection of the contents of the dressing-table.

Mr. Riggs shuddered. He felt that it was incumbent upon him to do something—but what? He was practically alone in the house, for Mrs. Riggs and the children were still, so to speak, being swept by ocean breezes, and the two servants were, presumably, enjoying well-earned

repose two floors above him. He considered various expedients: he might shout loudly for help. No, the black weapon was very convenient to the burglar's hand. He might suddenly spring upon the villain and by main strength overpower and bind him. No, decidedly; that would not be practicable. Mr. Riggs felt that he must consider his importance to his family and to the community. Better—far better—would it be that he should suffer the loss of a few trifles than that he should fight for his life with a desperate scoundrel like this. Decidedly, the wisest course was to lie still. He lay still.

The desperate scoundrel seemed to find nothing which took his fancy in the drawers of the dressing-table. Enlarging his field of operations, he extracted a roll of bills from the pocket of Mr. Riggs's waistcoat as it hung decorously over the back of a chair.

"Say, bo," he said, "that's not all you've got. Where's the rest?"

"I—I refuse to answer," said Mr. Riggs with decision.

"Oh, 'scuse me," said the burglar. He chuckled, but his manner changed instantly as he seized the little black weapon and advanced a step towards the bed.

"You don't want to get gay!" he said, with a threatening gesture. Mr. Riggs subsided promptly.

"My wallet is under my pillow," he murmured.

"Now yer shoutin'," said the burglar. "No, you keep yer hands down; I'll git it."

He inserted a grimy hand and dragged it out.

"And here's yer turnip too."

From the same hiding-place he extracted the poor gentleman's handsome repeater.

"I don't think that was right straight of you," he continued reproachfully. "Suppose I hadn't a-found that ticker?"

He straightened himself and cast a quick look about the room.

"Now, then," he said sharply, "where's yer wife's stuff—jools and things?"

A fortunate diversion relieved Mr. Riggs from the embarrassing necessity of replying. Through the open door of an adjoining room came the sound of heavy footsteps in the yard below and the rapping of a club on the pavement.

In an instant the burglar had dropped watch and money into a capacious pocket, had unlocked the door into the hall, and disappeared through it. Down the stairs he stumbled, and in a moment more the front door closed quietly behind him.

Mr. Riggs arose hastily. A ladder had been placed from the yard to the rear window, and up it, to the accompaniment of stertorous puffing, clambered a large policeman.

Mr. Riggs received him with all the dignity compatible with a suit of baby-blue pajamas.

"It was a burglar," he said. "He has escaped by the front door."

The officer nodded judicially.

"They ain't no use chasin' him now," said he; "we'll ketch him in the morning all right, all right! I seen the ladder when I com' by, so I sez to myself, 'I'll drop up,' I sez. What did he get?"

They investigated. Except for the money and watch, the loss was trifling.

Mr. Riggs told his story:

"I was awakened by the villain," said he, "just as he was about making his escape. I seized him, of course——"

"Sure!" interjected the policeman sympathetically.

"But he held me by the throat with one hand while he ran down-stairs with the other—I mean, he threw me down and ran."

"He must 'a' been a big devil," said the officer with deep interest. "Say, that'll be Beef Nolan. I seen him hangin' round here the other night. What was he, a big fellow, six feet two, two hundred pounds, scar on cheek, front teeth out, sandy hair?"

"I—I think so," said Mr. Riggs, a little overwhelmed by his own mendacity.

"That's all right then. You go back to bed. I'll take away the ladder. He won't bother you again." He descended as he had come and disappeared in the darkness with his burden.

Before Mr. Riggs had finished his toilet a few hours later the door-bell had rung several times. A flustered maid bore him the intelligence that the parlor was full of gentlemen—reporters, they said.

To an interested circle with yellow copy-paper and flying pencils he told his story once more,—simply and with dignity, as becomes a hero. Perhaps a reasonable amount of exaggeration might be forgiven in one who had lived through so strenuous an experience, but we shudder at the height to which he must have reached to warrant the following, which appeared in that afternoon's *News*:

"BURGLARY!

"THE HOUSE OF A PROMINENT BANKER ENTERED!

"DESPERATE BATTLE IN THE DARKNESS.

"MR. H. M. RIGGS FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE WITH HEAVILY
ARMED SCOUNDREL.

"At a late hour last night burglars entered the palatial Walnut Street residence of Mr. Hector Montgomery Riggs, Cashier of the Twelfth National Bank and well known in social and financial circles. The scoundrels effected an entrance by means of a ladder from the yard, and would, doubt-

less, have ransacked the house but for the signal bravery of Mr. Riggs, who, awakened by a slight noise, grappled, bare-handed, with the heavily armed villains. His desperate resistance so intimidated the miscreants that they did not use their weapons, but were finally glad to make good their escape, taking with them only Mr. Riggs's watch—a handsome timepiece presented to him by his associates at the bank—and a large sum of money, of which they were able to lay hold during the mêlée.

"The police of the Twenty-seventh District are working on the case and hope to have the gang of marauders behind the bars in the near future. The leader of the gang is described by Mr. Riggs as a perfect giant in physique, and armed to the teeth, a fact which indicates even more strongly the courage and nerve displayed by the banker.

"Fortunately, Mrs. Riggs and the three charming children were still at their country home at Beachhurst and were spared the annoyance and distress of the painful incident.

"Mr. Riggs, who is a member of the United and Aldine Clubs and a host of other organizations, spent to-day at home, resting, and receiving the congratulations of his many friends on his heroism."

As a matter of fact, it was anything rather than a restful day for the hitherto quiet banker. Friends, reporters, detectives, beset him all day. To all he told his story, and to each with a growing plenitude of detail. The somewhat strained tale into which he had stumbled the night before through a vague feeling that the truth would render him ridiculous seemed less and less extravagant with each repetition. In fact, by evening he had arrived at a state of mind in which he believed everything—or nearly everything—that he told.

Seeking new worlds to conquer, he strolled down to his club at twilight. He was received with quite unusual emprossement. Men whom he hardly knew came up to him with hearty congratulations. He was pointed out to strangers. Compliments and more tangible offerings in the shape of cocktails and cigars were pressed upon him. He was overwhelmed with invitations to dinner.

And right nobly did he sustain this new-found fame. Nothing could have been finer, more simple, more restrained than his manner when, at the extempore dinner given in his honor and in answer to tumultuous solicitations, he told his story once more. Through frequent rehearsals he had unconsciously learnt to give to the narrative the one touch necessary to its perfecting,—that of the embarrassment of a brave man at unsought honors, belittling his feats, deprecating the homage of the world. His hearers rose and cheered to the echo, and even the gouty old gentlemen in the reading-room refrained from writing letters to the House Committee when they learnt the cause of the commotion.

It would have been a daring footpad who could have mustered courage to attack the dignified and martial gentleman who strode home that night with chest expanded and walking-stick firmly held.

Another ovation awaited Mr. Riggs at the bank the following morning. The President, Mr. Coggsell, arrived a half hour earlier than usual and still further departed from his usual custom by smoking a cigar with the hero in the latter's cosey office. They discussed, with Mr. Rogers, the vice-president, who had also dropped in, the general subject of burglary, embellished with instances from Mr. Riggs's experience.

"Yes," the latter was saying, "it was an emergency which might well have shaken the stoutest nerves. I must confess that there was a moment when I really feared that I should not be able to prevent the scoundrel from reaching his weapons. I feel that it was only the quickness and determination of my onslaught and the fact that I was fighting for life itself that enabled me to overcome the enormous advantage given the robber by his great strength and weight. Given an antagonist of anything like my own size, I think I may now say without boasting that the result would have been somewhat different. At the same time," he continued modestly, "I feel that there has been altogether too much made of this little matter. I am sure that no one in my place could have acted differently. In fact, I may say that my principal emotion at this time is—of—er—embarrassment at the thought that my strength did not prove sufficient to enable me to capture the villain."

"Mr. Riggs," said the President solemnly, "I fully understand that your modesty impels you to belittle your bravery, but I think I may speak both for myself and my fellow-directors when I say that we fully realize that, had it not been for your superb display of those qualities of personal courage which in these days are so seldom shown, had it not been, sir, for the intrepidity of your conduct, the Twelfth National, sir, would have been to-day without a cashier. It will be through no lack of effort on my part, sir, if the board shall not vote you a substantial recognition, therefore, of your services to it and to this honored institution.

The tinkle of his 'phone bell interrupted Mr. Riggs as he sought for fitting words with which to reply.

"Hullo," said a strange voice, "hullo, is this Mr. Riggs? Well, this is Chief of Detectives Kelly at City Hall. We've got a man down here that we'd like you to take a look at. He don't answer your description exactly, but we've got the evidence to connect him with another burglary in your neighborhood and we'd like you to see him. Can you drop in this afternoon? Four o'clock? All right. Good-by."

Thus it came to pass that Mr. Riggs, accompanied by his two fellow-

officers, who had refused to forsake him in this ordeal, crossed for the first time the threshold of a police station.

Detective Kelly greeted them with cordiality.

"Say, that must have been a peach scrap you put up the other night," said he to the Cashier, as he led the way to an open space on which fronted a dismal row of grated doors. "I don't hardly think this is your man, but it won't do any harm for you to take a look at him. We haven't traced your watch yet, but they wouldn't try to hock that for a while. Hey, Jimmy, bring out that crook that Bates got this morning."

From a cell half-way down the row Jimmy, the burly turnkey, produced a man. He was certainly not the desperate giant of Mr. Riggs's description. Small, slight, and consumptive-looking, he hardly reached to the banker's shoulder.

"Say, boss," he began, "I ain't done nothing. You never seen me before, did yer, boss?"

"Shut up!" remarked Jimmy perfunctorily.

From above his expanse of fair white waistcoat Mr. Riggs looked down upon his visitor of two nights before. He realized that the tables were turned, and he thirsted for revenge. There was no doubt in his mind as to the man's identity. He was certainly the wretch who robbed him. At the same time, the situation was distinctly delicate. If he denounced this puny scoundrel, what would become of his newly found fame. Prompt action was required.

Mr. Riggs cleared his throat judicially.

"This is not the villain who robbed me," he said, "my man was a *big* man."

But as Mr. Riggs turned away he caught the barest flicker of a smile in the eyes of the burglar.



FRIENDSHIP

BY MARION PELTON GUILD

THESE days and those days,
 And all of life between!
 Dream days, rose days,
 And fading leaves for green!
 But constant as this heart that beats
 To one unaltered tune,
 O friend, thy soul exhales its sweets
 In Love's perpetual June.

AN HEIR TO MILLIONS

BY
FREDERIC REDDALE

AUTHOR OF "THE OTHER MAN"



PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
1903

**COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER, 1903



AN HEIR TO MILLIONS

BY FREDERIC REDDALE

Author of "The Other Man," etc.

I

THE westering sun was casting lengthy shadows among the gaunt pines and sturdy aspens along the steep upward slope of a certain wild cañon in the Nevada Sierras.

Five hundred feet below the dry floor of the gulch, which here widened to a narrow valley, was filled from wall to wall with a motley huddle of rough cabins, jig-saw cottages, a glaring red-brick opera-house, hotel, and bank all in one, and a pair of clapboarded, white-washed churches.

Upon the sultry and drowsy air of a summer afternoon there arose the confused hum and the hoarse murmur of strenuous industry, above which, like the footsteps of the animated stone statue in "Don Juan," the insistent note of the busy "stamps," at work night and day, three "shifts" in each twenty-four hours, dominated all other sounds.

This was the little mining town of Meleen, named in honor of its founder, who was likewise the discoverer, manipulator, and chief owner of the rich Peacock lode, which gave employment to three hundred men and netted over a million a year for its stockholders.

Rough and ready, ignorant and shrewd, was old Andrew Meleen. Originally a Welsh miner in Cardiff and later in the Pennsylvania coal-fields, he by turns had been volunteer soldier, pioneer, prospector, and finally many times a millionaire, after weary years of fortune-chasing up and down the gold and silver country of the Great West.

For the crude affairs of this typical raw Western camp, with its bizarre admixture of civilization and savagery, we have only a passing interest in that it is the starting-point of the story in hand. Our

present and more vividly human concern is with the creator of all this industry and potential wealth—and he lay a-dying.

Far up the eastern hillside commanding the town, whence one could almost fancy he was looking over the next divide to where the flaming sun was setting amid cloudy billows in the wide Pacific miles beyond, on a sort of bench or plateau an acre in extent, stood a curious and rambling wooden structure, in triple part log-cabin, hunting-ranch, and modern country-house.

This unique huddle of divers styles of pioneer architecture really represented as many different periods in the fortunes of its eccentric owner. The rough, unbarked logs of the original single-roomed cabin which formed a prominent wing or angle marked the poor-pro prospector stage; then, with more prosperous times, came an addition framed by a wandering Yankee carpenter and sheathed with boards of red-wood, now beautifully weathered to a rich mahogany hue; finally, as if to mark the ultimate rise to affluence of the occupant, a two-story structure had been added, shingled as to walls and roof, while upon three sides a covered veranda wide enough for a fashionable cotillon, approached by generous steps and a peaked porch, gave comfortable assurance of cool shade and a constant breeze shifting with the sun.

Around and above porch and cabin there clambered festoons of grape-vines and wild creepers, the dark-green leaves lending a deeper tinge to the background of cedar and redwood posts and walls.

From this eyrie the old man who was its chief occupant could easily toss a lump of his own shining ore on the roofs of the little town beneath; viewed by day, the smoke of its furnaces went winding away in long spirals and ribbons of vapor; at night, the spurts of colored flame from the chimneys of retort-house and smelter lit up the opposite sides of the cañon in fitful flashes of murky red, or paled to an orange glow under the wan light of the moon.

The solitary dweller on the hillside never wearied of the changing picture. It was his; he had called into being the town and its throbbing industries; he loved it with the passionate, yearning love of a wifeless and childless old man. For him the cities of the coast—Los Angeles or San Francisco, Portland or Seattle—possessed few charms. They only served to bank his constantly increasing millions. The rough little town, with its amazing monthly output of gold and silver and copper, stood to him in place of wife and child; the queer old ranch overlooking it all was his real home—his pride, his passion, his delight.

And now the time was come when he must leave it all and go hence, for Andy Meleen was dying, and chiefly of that most incurable of diseases, old age, while his vast wealth must descend to an heir whom he had never seen.

Upon a curious contrivance of domestic devising, half bedstead, half reclining-chair, set upon casters so that it could readily be wheeled indoors and out, lay the old millionaire. Each livelong day, from sunrise to sunset, he insisted on being placed in his wide porch, whence he could still oversee his beloved town, and gaze at the noble prospect, with its constantly shifting panorama of lights and shadows. Only nightfall drove him within doors.

Rugged and gnarled as his own native hills, originally of great girth and mighty in stature, he was now shrunk to mere skin and bone. All the life and virility of the man seemed to have retreated to the massive head, as beleaguered forces take refuge in some strong keep for a last desperate rally. From beneath a square forehead and a thatch of grizzled eyebrows a pair of piercing gray-blue eyes flashed imperiously, while from the heaving chest there still issued tones surprisingly strong for one so evidently near his end. There was no sign of senility when he shot a curt query at his only servant, an old pioneer like himself, who sat in the doorway stolidly cleaning a rifle, out of sight but within call.

"Putty nigh time that lawyer fellow was here, eh?" said Andy over his shoulder, striving vainly to raise his head from the high-heaped cushions, but only succeeding in moving it from side to side.

Evan rose and went to the railing of the veranda, whence one could see the winding road, scarcely more than a well-trodden trail, which led from the town to the house on the hill. Shading his eyes from the blinding glare of the nearly level sun-rays, he peered downward for some moments before responding. Then, saying laconically,—

"Jest comin' up the rise," he returned to his seat and his task.

Shortly there became audible the soft thud of hoof-beats and the creaking of straining leather, punctuated by the cracking of a whip and the encouraging "cluck-cluck" of the driver.

The road curved behind the house, and as the sounds drew away Meleen followed them with a hearkening, rolling motion of the head infinitely pathetic in its yearning helplessness and impotence.

Soon there was the sound of footsteps within the house, and there appeared upon the veranda the long-expected arrival, Phineas Carboy, a well-known San Francisco practitioner in the law, whose firm had transacted most of Andrew Meleen's affairs since he had been wealthy enough to afford the luxury of eminent legal advice. Never in his life had he needed it more than now.

His eyes flashed with feverish impatience as he responded to the lawyer's formal greetings. Hardly was he seated, note-book in hand, than the dying man rapped out curtly,—

"Are y' ready?"

"Quite so, Mr. Meleen," was the response; knowing his man, Mr. Carboy wasted no words on formal condolences or tame civilities.

"Un'erstand what I want done?" was the next question.

"Your telegram intimated that you desired to give me instructions for your last will and testament."

"Instructions,—yes,—ye'll get enough of them!" with a grim smile; "but I want the thing fixed up this blessed night. My time's short, as y' see. Can y' do it,—will it stand?"

Mr. Carboy nodded gravely, and with pen ready poised looked expectantly at his client. But the latter's next words were not exactly those he anticipated.

"How much sh'd you say I wuz wuth, Carboy, if everything wuz cleaned up an' turned into cash?" inquired the old man. The legal mind hesitated, but only for an instant.

"Twenty-five or thirty million dollars at the very least," was the quiet reply.

"I guess that's about it," sighed Andy Meleen. "Now, man, stick a pin through this: I'm going to leave all that I'm wuth to a feller I've niver seen!"

He shot a keen glance at Mr. Carboy to judge of the effect of this somewhat startling announcement, but the lawyer was too well trained to show any mark of surprise beyond a slight contracting and lifting of the eyebrows.

"You know his name, I presume, and where he can be found?"

"No, I don't!" was the reply snapped back; "that's for you t' find out. This is the way of it: I had an only sister over there in th' old country named Mattie. She kem t' Ameriky ten year attar I did. an' I heard she wuz married an' had a son. But I've forgotten her husband's name if I iver knew it. Ha'n't seen her since she wuz a slip of a girl. 'Course, she may be dead, an' the boy too, though she wuz younger'n me by four or five year; but you've got to try an' find 'em."

"You never saw your sister after she arrived in this country, and held no communication whatever?" asked the lawyer, making notes.

Meleen shook his head. "I wuz mighty poor myself in those days, Carboy, an'—oh, well, I'd troubles of my own, an' then I drifted West an' out here."

"Where was this sister living when you last heard of her?"

"N' York."

"How many years ago would that be?"

"'Bout twenty, I reckon."

"And her son, if living, is to have everything?"

"That's it!" was the emphatic reply. "Gosh! I bet he'll be astonished wherever and whoever he is!"

"Doubtless!" was Carboy's dry comment. "But had you no other kin, Mr. Meleen?"

"Nary a kin," was the reply. "There was on'y me an' Mattie, an' we wuz left orphins when I wuz no bigger'n a shovel."

"No cousins, for instance?" persisted Mr. Carboy.

"Nary a cousin."

"Were you ever married yourself?" was the next query. Simple and necessary as it was under the circumstances, and put in a colorless, matter-of-fact manner, its effect on the recumbent figure of old Andy Meleen was like that of a galvanic battery applied to a corpse. His nervous and shrunken frame twitched and quivered; the once mighty chest heaved as though it would burst asunder; great beads of sweat broke out on face and forehead, and his strong mouth and chin trembled with emotions entirely apart from causes due to age and weakness. Mr. Carboy was genuinely distressed at the effect he had so unwittingly produced. Something in the question had touched Andy on the raw. In halting and fragmentary phrases he said:

"God forgive me, Carboy, I *wuz* married, an' to the sweetest little woman that ever trod God A'mighty's footstool! I wuz a man full grown then,—forty-five years old,—old 'nuff to know better! I wuz workin' in the Pennsylvania coal-mines. A month attar the weddin' we had a main bitter quarrel. There kem a strike, an' I went out along o' the rest o' the boys. Minna didn't like my bein' out o' work, an' told me so. There wuz hot words, an' in a blindin' rage I struck her an' left the house, swearin' I'd never go back! Then, like a fule, I went an' 'listed for Uncle Sam. At the fightin' in th' Wilderness, my fust battle, I got hit in three or four places, an' th' ambylances left me on the field for dead. But an old farmer picked me up, an' attar puttin' in a year o' hospital I kem out putty nigh as fit as ever. Th' war wuz over, an' then I heerd that my wife, my Minna, had died in her time o' trouble an' her girl baby with her. As Heaven's my witness, I've niver squared myself *with* myself for leavin' her alone at such a time. I tramped West,—niver showed my ugly face East ag'in,—an' you know the rest."

"Forgive me for arousing such painful memories, Mr. Meleen," said Carboy, "but the inquiry was inevitable; we must know where we stand."

Old Andy signified that he heard and appreciated. The strain of this long recital had come mighty near to parting his mortal coil then and there, and he lay as one indeed very near to death. Mr. Carboy waited a few minutes—he was not yet done with his probings into the past. At length Meleen opened his eyes once more and turned

them mutely on his inquisitor, who interpreted that as a sign for him to proceed.

"I presume these matters can be verified—the time and place of your marriage and the date of demise of your wife and child?"

For answer the old miner produced a well-worn leather wallet from under the blanket which covered him.

"You'll find th' dates an' names there," he said faintly. "Anythin' more y' want t' know?"

"One other point must be settled: suppose this nephew of yours is dead, or cannot be found—who is to inherit in that case?"

Another spasm contorted Andy's rugged features.

"It goes to the State, I s'pose; that's the law, ain't it?"

Carboy nodded.

"Well, that's on'y right. The money kem out o' old Nevady; let her have it back ag'in. But mind you, Carboy, not till you've raked all creation with a fine-tooth comb to find Mattie's boy."

"Whom will you name as executors or trustees?"

"Must you have 'em?" Meleen answered anxiously, as though the functionaries referred to were of a species noxious and undesirable.

"Undoubtedly; they are necessary evils."

Meleen frowned in perplexity. It seemed as though it were costing him far more trouble to leave his money behind him than it had been to amass it and guard it during his eventful life.

"Can't you fellers act?" he inquired dubiously at length,—"you fellers,"—indicating Mr. Carboy and his partners.

"Certainly, if you wish it. Two will be sufficient. Suppose we say Mr. Passavant and myself?"

With a gesture as of one wearied with the whole subject Meleen signified assent. Then, as the lawyer rose to go indoors, he said,—

"Fix it up quick, Carboy, I'm mortal tired!"

By this time the sun had set behind the western wall of mountains, and Evan appeared to wheel his master within. But the tough old fellow demurred. Half his nights had been spent in the open air with only the starry canopy for a tent. Now that the end was near, he dreaded the cribbed and cabined confinement of four walls. So a lantern was brought and hung to the rafters of the porch, where its dim radiance could not interfere with that piercing gaze which to the last roamed lovingly over the mountain prospect.

One, two hours passed, and save for the steady, harshly rhythmical "crunch-crunch" of the "stamps" the town below was strangely quiet. Every soul therein knew that the master-mind in the hill-side eyrie was passing away; hushed were the usual sounds of rude

revelry and "wide-open" license. It was felt to be a fateful night for the town of Meleen.

At length Mr. Carboy's task was done. A table was carried on to the porch; by lantern-light the will was read to the testator, who turned his eyes to meet those of the lawyer in mute approval when the reading was ended. Then, lifted and supported by old Evan, he affixed his uncouth and sprawling signature, the witnesses followed, and the deed was done which bequeathed a princely fortune and a royal revenue to—whom?

Next morning Andrew Meleen was found lifeless in bed, his gnarled and knotted features composed in a peaceful, almost ecstatic, smile.

"Perhaps he has found Minna!" mused the lawyer, with humid eyes, as he stood by the side of his strange client.

II.

In an old-fashioned sitting-room in an antiquated brick house in that unfashionable quarter of "down-town" New York formerly known as Greenwich Village there sat, one autumn evening, a young couple, both of whom were exceedingly good to look upon.

To the judicious observer it would have been apparent from their attitude and bearing each towards the other that they were something more than mere friends, yet less than man and wife. In fact, they were contented and happy dwellers in that delectable border-land known as Being Engaged.

The girl was fairly tall of stature, brune as to complexion, with a wealth of fine and glossy dark hair which rippled and waved around a small but shapely head and above a witchingly feminine forehead, white and broad and low. Her eyes were of a very steadfast dark gray, set widely apart, giving one the impression of quiet repose and cool judgment. A firm chin above a strong and supple throat made her look older and more womanly than her years really warranted. She was busied with one of those trifles of needlework which keep the fingers busy without curbing one's tongue, and at the same time serve to display to admiring and even coquettish advantage a very shapely wrist and hand. Yet even the dearest of her feminine friends would never have insinuated that Eunice Trevecca was the least bit of a coquette. Indeed, it needed but a glance into the depths of those quiet gray eyes to convince you that here was a nature tender and true as that of the Douglas himself.

So at least thought young Wilfrid Stennis, who sat opposite to her, and who certainly enjoyed the best opportunities in the world for knowing. He was a pleasant, wholesome lad, fair and florid, with light golden-brown hair and mustache, slim and with slightly stooped

shoulders. A rather weak face on the whole, one might say, though perhaps this was partly owing to a rather querulous droop of the mustache, which barely veiled the sensitive mouth; a beard would better have hidden a chin which was far too pretty for any mere man.

Had you guessed him to be a clerk or a bookkeeper you would not have been far astray—one of those men who make exceedingly valuable and faithful servants but very poor masters. As to character, he was neither better nor worse than thousands of other youngsters who start out in life in some down-town office or store at three dollars a week, the goal of whose ambition is to earn fifteen hundred or two thousand dollars a year, to marry some pleasant girl, settle down in a Harlem flat or a little one-of-a-row house over in Brooklyn, raise a small family, get along on a couple of new suits of clothes each year, with a semi-occasional visit to the theatre in winter and an outing on Saturday afternoons at Coney Island or Rockaway.

Not a wildly hilarious or thrilling existence, it may be granted, yet there are hundreds and thousands of such men—gentlemanly and refined, neither very strong nor very weak, not vicious nor conspicuously virtuous, but who, in a paraphrase of the old Shorter Catechism, are piously or mechanically “doing their duty in that state of life to which it has pleased the Almighty to call them.” It is of kindred stuff that the “average citizen” is made.

Even to such men strange dreams may come—fond and foolish visions of wealth and power, hopeless of realization, mayhap, yet nevertheless frequently prompted by certain innate or inherited cravings for the good things of this life which only money can procure, and for the enjoyment of which they feel a yearning and an infinite capacity if only they had the chance.

“Oh, it’s a splendid thing to be rich!” Wilfrid was even then saying to Eunice. “Just think of what a man could do if he were really in possession of more money than he knew how to spend! I don’t mean a paltry hundred thousand dollars, but—well, say twenty or thirty or even fifty millions!”

“Why stop there?” put in Eunice with a quizzing little smile. “Why not say a hundred millions at once and be certain of having enough?”

“Because for practical purposes twenty millions would be ample,” said he. “The income from that should be—let me see,—doing a rapid sum in mental arithmetic,—“over half a million a year.”

“Well, and what would you do with it, Wilf, if you had it?” questioned Eunice, willing to humor his fancy.

Wilfrid drew a long breath and lay back in his chair. “In the first place, I’d build me a city house right here in New York on the east side of the Park or else at Riverside, and a country place some-

where up the Sound or on Long Island near the water. I'd want to live in the city not more than three or four months in the year. Then I'd have a yacht,—none of your smoky, greasy teakettles, but a sweet-smelling, fast-sailing schooner fit to go around the world,—and I'd sail her myself too. There would be horses for riding and driving, with perhaps a four-in-hand coach. Best of all, I could travel—south in winter, of course, but I'd see the world: London, Paris, Berlin, Italy, the pictures, the statues, and the libraries. Oh, I'd go everywhere and do everything, even to a little gaming at Monte Carlo; nothing wicked or vulgar about it all, you know, but the utmost enjoyment in a refined way, and all the experiences that money could give."

The girl smiled at his boyish enthusiasm, nor did she evince any pique or annoyance because Eunice Trevecca was somehow left out of the picture. It was all mere idle talk, of course. Wilfrid was not really unhappy or discontented; he had a good position with nine hundred a year, and they were to be married in the spring.

"You certainly could give some of our American nabobs a few lessons on how to be happy though rich," she smilingly commented. "It has often seemed to me that our really rich men do not get half as much out of life as they might."

"Of course they don't!" assented Wilfrid dogmatically. "Why, look at me," he rambled on; "I'm only half-baked; never had any education to speak of; had to keep my nose to the grindstone all my life; as you know, there were always two ways for every dollar to go as long as mother was alive, on account of her many years of hopeless illness; but, in spite of my few opportunities, I'll bet I could show some of those fellows how to enjoy their wealth!"

"Of course you could," Eunice agreed, with a loving woman's fatuous fondness and indulgence for the man she has promised to marry. "But we'll be just as happy without the money, won't we, Wilf?"

"Not a doubt of it!" he exclaimed, starting to her side, bending over her, and pressing his lips to her shining coils of hair. "Why, possessing you and your love, dearest, I'm the richest fellow in New York to-day."

She tilted back her head to look into his eyes as he gazed fondly down into hers.

"That's the way I love to hear you speak," she murmured. "Money cannot buy some things in this world, Wilf," a truism which was sealed in a very expressive and satisfactory manner by the naturally ardent Wilfrid.

Eunice, though very well educated and refined,—in England she would have been described as "quite above her station, my dear,"—

was only one remove from being a working-woman herself, and had no foolish or unpractical longings. As housekeeper for her stepfather, John Trevecca,—her mother she could not remember,—she was beyond the necessity of earning her own living; but Trevecca himself was but a foreman in some iron-works up on Tenth Avenue. So to Eunice the prospect of marrying so presentable a young fellow as Wilfrid Stennis, both of them being very much in love with each other, seemed the acme of good fortune, leaving nothing to be desired of the Fates.

And though Wilf was her senior by some four years,—he was twenty-eight,—the girl was really the elder in point of steady principle and cool, sober judgment. In fact, Wilf, as she often acknowledged to herself, was rather boyish, sanguine, mercurial, easily led. But she loved him for these very qualities; some women mother their husbands before the children arrive to keep their affections busy.

When old John Trevecca came in, coatless and bringing with him a strong aroma of cut Cavendish, for he had been smoking his pipe with some cronies on the "front porch," as they still call the house entrance up Greenwich way, the light of Wilfrid's rosy visions had not yet died out of his eyes. There was even an atmosphere of suppressed excitement in the homely room which caused the old man to look shrewdly at Eunice. If there were anything amiss between the lovers Trevecca knew he would find it in the girl's face. But apparently all was serene.

"Wilf has been telling me what he intends to do with all his money when he gets to be very rich," she said smilingly.

"That's easy spending," said Trevecca, sinking heavily into a chair. "There's more money got rid of that way in a year than'd pave N' York wi' dollars! But let's hear abart it, lad," he added.

"Oh, it was just foolish talk," said Wilfrid, on whose late enthusiasm the blunt words of his prospective father-in-law were like a bucket of cold water on a bonfire.

Nevertheless, as he walked home to his lodgings on Washington Square the exaltation of the earlier evening still clung to him, and as he swung along in the clear, crisp autumn night his step was jaunty, his head held high, and he was potentially as rich as he was actually poor.

To such a man as Wilfrid Stennis, uneducated as the college world counts learning, but eager, receptive, possessing an eye for beauty and for color, with a love for music, an unformed, omnivorous appetite for books, and an instinctive shrinking from the sordid and the mean, the bonds of even respectable poverty are apt to prove especially galling. Like Bella Wilfer, he realized to the full what it meant to be "beastly poor, miserably poor."

What wonder, then, that his longings, his aspirations, his day-

dreams, were centred about that wealth which he so often saw others abusing, or misusing, or keeping napkin-tied? Not for the miser's greed of possession, but for the gratification of the best that was in him, did he long for money—heaps and heaps of it.

Overnight day-dreams, fortunately, come cheap, and they leave no dark-brown taste in the mouth. The next morning, when Wilfrid Stennis went down-town to the Front Street store, he was again the prosaic and methodical young entry-clerk. No one would have suspected him of secret yearnings for fast horses, a faster yacht, and a little flutter around the tables so hospitably maintained by the Prince of Monaco.

III.

THE exigencies of the story carry us westward once more. The scene is the San Francisco office of Messrs. Carboy, Passavant & Cozine. The time, some six weeks subsequent to the funeral of Andrew Meleen. There enters to the private room of our old friend, Phineas Carboy, a certain Roger Hews, who at sundry and divers times acted in the capacity of confidential agent for the firm; even a little detective work came occasionally in his line: a quiet, sleek, unobtrusive sort of fellow outwardly, straw-colored as to hair and closely trimmed whiskers, soberly dressed, aged about thirty-five, agile as a mountain-cat, shifty as a red fox, and a walking advertisement of the truth of that old adage about still waters running deeply.

"When did you get back?" quoth Mr. Carboy, with a nod.

"Last night, sir."

"How did you find those matters in Pennsylvania?"

"Quite satisfactory, I should say. Everything seems to be about as you expected."

"Concerning Mrs. Meleen, now: Were you able to confirm her marriage and subsequent decease?"

"The woman died on the tenth of October, 'sixty-five, and was buried in Nanticoke Township. I could find no record of her marriage to Mr. Meleen."

These statements were perfectly true—on their face.

"And the child—what of the child?"

"There was no record of either its birth or death."

This was a deliberate lie!

"That's awkward," exclaimed Mr. Carboy. "Meleen distinctly stated that there was a child. How do you account for the discrepancy?"

"Very simply. If the mother died in travail and the child with her, as I inferred from your instructions, there might naturally have been no record of the infant's entrance into or departure from the world. In all likelihood the baby would not even be named."

"That's not altogether improbable," assented the lawyer, scratching his nose. "But the point is a vital one. It is hardly likely that Meleen could have been mistaken in his belief, and yet—— Are you altogether sure of your facts?"

"Perfectly," was the unflinching reply.

Which was lie number two!

"Any collateral evidence on the matter, such as neighborhood gossip or the recollections of the oldest inhabitant?"

"Nothing of the sort that I could discover," said the unblushing Hews.

This was lie number three!

"No one seemed to remember Andrew Meleen or his wife," he went on, lying glibly, "which is not surprising if, as you led me to infer, he was then only a common mine-worker, and if, as seems to be undisputed, he never revisited the place."

"True enough," Carboy admitted. He had perfect confidence in Roger Hews, who on more than one occasion had served the firm faithfully.

"Well, the way seems to be clear for us to advertise for the missing nephew or other next of kin. Martha Meleen, in all human probability, has preceded her brother across the Great Divide."

"I should say that was the next step, sir," rejoined Roger Hews in level tones, as though the fact that twenty or thirty million dollars were at stake possessed for him no interest at all.

But that sleek exterior covered a seething volcano of a plot which had for its hatchment and its goal the personal and private aggrandizement of Mr. Roger Hews. In his report to Mr. Carboy he had deliberately suppressed some facts and had cheerfully lied about others. That he had thus proved false to the trust reposed in him troubled his exceedingly rubber-like conscience not a whit. He was about to play the game of his life. It was a daring scheme, and might not "pan out worth a cent," as he admitted to himself, but it was worth trying.

Somewhat to the surprise of Mr. Carboy, when he next desired the services of Roger Hews he was informed that the gentleman had gone East, leaving no address.

IV.

A RAINY November Sunday in New York, the trees of the parks and squares shrouded in mist and dripping with moisture, the pavements shining with wet and the gutters running full.

Altogether a thoroughly wretched day, and a very proper morning for lying late abed with one's pipe and the Sunday paper. So thought Wilfrid Stennis, thanking the gods for the one blessed day in seven,

made for tired men, when it was not necessary to turn out and hurry down-town.

It was characteristic of the desultory and fragmentary reading habits of the young man that he regularly consumed—assimilated would be too strong a word—the hybrid contents of the average Sunday sheet: news, scandals, fashionable and sporting intelligence, foreign affairs, and editorials. Religiously would he wade through every numbered section, from the “Lost-and-Found” column to the “Shipping Items.”

On this particular Sunday he had pursued the usual routine, saving the “Personals” to the last, chuckling over their various gaudy baits for the unwary, and wondering if the affectionate blond young lady with a good disposition and a ditto figure ever succeeded in meeting or catching her elusive affinity.

He had lazily made his way about half-way down the first column when he came to the following:

“**INFORMATION WANTED**—Concerning the whereabouts, if living, of Martha Meleen, formerly of Cardiff, Wales, who emigrated to the United States about 1860; or, should she have married and is now deceased, of her descendants, if any. A liberal reward will be paid on application to Carboy, Passavant & Cozine, Temple Court, New York City. Welsh papers please copy.”

Wilfrid Stennis read it idly at first and with unseeing mind. Then the name “Martha Meleen” caught his truant attention, and with bated breath, pipe suspended in air, he read the thing through again, taking in every detail.

“Martha Meleen!” he ejaculated half aloud, letting the paper fall; “mother’s maiden name, by all that’s holy! I wonder what’s up?”

He jumped out of bed, walked to the window, and took a survey of the dreary vista of Washington Square and its arch, all ghostly in the fog, in order to clear his mental vision and confirm the impression that he was really wide awake. Then he picked up the paper and again read the notice all through.

“Hanged if I know what to make of it!” he exclaimed, hurrying into some clothes.

Taking the paper, and carefully creasing it at the proper place, he went across the hall, and after knocking at a certain door, unceremoniously entered without being bidden. A young fellow of about his own age was occupied precisely as Stennis had been a quarter of an hour before—their ideas of comfort on a wet Sunday evidently coinciding to a hair.

“Here, Matt, old man, read this, and tell us what you think of it,” said Wilf.

The "old man," who happened to be Stennis's junior by three or four years, took the paper handed to him and read the momentous advertisement through twice. Then, handing back the sheet,—

"Well, what about it!" he said.

"The name—my mother, you know!" exclaimed Stennis; "her name was Meleen before she was married. She was from Cardiff too, now I come to think of it!"

"The devil you say!" ejaculated Stanley Matthews, dropping a pair of pajama-clad extremities over the edge of his bed. "Read it out loud, will you?"

Wilfrid complied.

"Seems as if you were the 'descendants' right enough; guess you're the fellow they're after, Wilf. When are you going to surrender yourself?"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Stennis testily. "What does it mean, anyhow?"

"Doesn't say anything about 'return and all will be forgiven,' does it?" inquired the incorrigible Matthews.

"You go to the devil!" said the badgered Wilfrid as he flung out of the room, banging the door.

"I'll take it around and show it to Eunice," he said to himself; "it's just about time to catch her coming home from church; she'll be able to guess what it means." Which was a very sanguine estimate of the girl's powers at divining the hidden significance in a purposely blind advertisement such as that which Messrs. Carboy, Passavant & Cozine had cautiously inserted.

Naturally, Eunice was no wiser than Wilf at solving the temporary mystery, but his excitement proved contagious, and with an unwonted flush in her pretty cheeks she scanned the lines over and over again.

"Oh, we can't tell what it signifies!" she at length exclaimed. "You will see these people in the morning, Wilf. It's of no use worrying or exciting ourselves in the meantime."

This was such an eminently sensible view of the matter that Wilfrid was fain to acquiesce. Yet this temporary shelving of the difficulty did not prevent them from recurring again and again to the fascinating topic all through the remaining hours of that momentous Sabbath.

Under the rather skilful questioning of Eunice Wilfrid recalled many half-forgotten fragments of his mother's history, but nothing that seemed to shed any light on the possible or probable motive behind the newspaper notice.

Bright and early on the ensuing Monday morning, on his way to the store, Wilfrid called at Temple Court. Of course, he was hours

too early; a sulky and stupid boy was the sole representative of the majesty of the law in the quarters occupied by that eminent trio, Carboy, Passavant & Cozine, of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco.

So there was nothing for it but to curb his impatience and wait for the noon hour, when he would be at liberty for a brief spell.

At the second attempt he was more fortunate, and had the satisfaction of sending in his name on a slip of paper to the resident member of the firm, Mr. Horatio Passavant, with the statement that he had called in answer to the advertisement in the paper of the day before. He was immediately ushered into an inner office.

"This is a quicker nibble than we dared expect, Mr.—ah—Stennis," quoth the great man, puffing ponderously, and waving him to a seat. "May I inquire in what way you are interested?"

"I am the son of the late Martha Meleen," said Wilfrid simply.

"Ah, yes, very pertinent, of course. Glad to know you, Mr.—er—Stennis. But the proofs, now. In such a case as this, you see, with colossal interests at stake, we have to proceed with the utmost circumspection. You follow me, no doubt?"

"If by 'proofs' you mean to question that I am what I say," began Wilfrid, getting hot under the collar, "why——"

Mr. Horatio Passavant deprecatingly waved a fat hand liberally studded with rings. "In the law, young sir, every statement must be substantiated by proofs—unless it be axiomatic. *You* assert that you are the son of Martha—er—Stennis, born Meleen. I ask you for proofs,—such as the certificate of your mother's marriage, the register of your own birth and parentage, the official evidence of your mother's death,—all very simple matters in these days of carefully kept statistics, but vital, my dear sir, essentially vital."

"This old fellow likes to hear himself talk," was Wilfrid's irreverent inward comment as he listened to the deliberately well-measured periods, delivered with due oratorical effect, as though the speaker were addressing a jury. But aloud he said, with a smile:

"I haven't brought them with me, not knowing what might be required, or, indeed, what was the object of your advertisement; but all the things you speak of ought to be easily obtained. My mother was married in this city, I was born here, and here she and my father died."

"Very sensibly put—could not have presented it better myself," said Mr. Passavant soothingly, nodding his bald head like a Mandarin image, thereby bringing into prominence no less than three separate and distinct double chins.

"Now, as to your mother's place of nativity: You say she was born in New York?"

"I didn't say so," Wilfrid impulsively blurted out; "she was a native of Cardiff, in Wales."

"Yes, yes, to be sure. And your father, now: was he a Welshman?"

"My father was a New Yorker; he died when I was very young, and I can hardly remember him. Mother was a widow for over twenty years. I was her sole support nearly all that time."

"Exactly; kind and dutiful son, and all that sort of thing," commented Mr. Passavant, beaming benignly. "But had your mother no relatives to whom she could appeal for assistance?" The question was asked in the dry legal tone, as one of no special moment, the questioner absently fingering some papers on the desk before him.

"She occasionally spoke of an elder brother somewhere in this country, but she never heard from him, that I can remember, and we always supposed he was killed in the war."

"And his name—surely you have heard her mention his name, Mr. Stennis?"

"Why, certainly. It was Andrew—Andrew Meleen, of course!"

The lawyer's indifferent manner had disappeared, and he had leaned forward anxiously in his chair pending this answer, but now he resumed his former position with as much satisfaction shining in his fat face as the legal proprieties ever permitted.

"Well, Mr. Stennis, I am warranted in going so far as to say that this interview has been eminently satisfactory up to this point, and I am delighted to have made your acquaintance. I will have those little details to which I alluded looked up, and if you will do me the honor to call here at the same hour this day week I may have some interesting news for you—some ex-ceeding-ly interesting news, in fact."

"But—but," stammered Wilfrid, "I am not a bit wiser than when I came in! You've pumped me dry, and I should like to know something about the advertisement,—what it means,—and so would my—my friends."

Mr. Passavant looked at the quivering Wilf compassionately and dispassionately over his gold-rimmed glasses.

"Your impatience is quite excusable under the circumstances, my dear sir, but until we have in our hands the collateral proofs of which I have spoken, it would be manifestly improper for me to commit myself further. Good-morning!"

"And so," as Wilfrid ruefully told Eunice that evening, "I came away like the King of France, who marched up the hill and down again, and got nothing for my trouble."

Eunice made him tell the story of the interview twice over, and then sat quietly ruminating, her forehead and eyebrows puckered in a puzzled frown.

"It must be—I am sure of it, Wilf," she exclaimed at length. "The advertisement has something to do with that long-lost Uncle Andrew of yours!"

"Do you really think so?" said Wilf dubiously. "Why, all old Passavant's talk was about mother; he only mentioned Uncle Andrew once."

"You silly boy!" the girl exclaimed with pretty petulance, giving him a little push, "that's the very thing that makes me sure!"

From which it may be seen that Eunice Trevecca possessed what has been called the "leaping mind."

So there was nothing for it but to wait the week out with what patience the trio could muster—for Eunice and old Trevecca were equally interested with Wilfrid. The time passed in all sorts of feverish conjectures, and Wilf, it must be confessed, was a somewhat idle and careless apprentice all that week.

Hence it was with a beating heart and all sorts of nameless and formless expectations that Stennis presented himself in Temple Court at the appointed hour one week later.

This time his reception was cordiality itself, tempered with such marked respect as to be positively embarrassing to a youngster so inexperienced in the ways of the world. There was a third person present also, introduced as Mr. Phineas Carboy, the senior member of the firm.

Both partners impressively shook hands with their visitor and were quite deferential in manner. Mr. Passavant's demeanor might even be described as parentally affectionate.

Wilfrid sat on the edge of the proffered seat in some trepidation, and found himself focussed by a battery of four eyes and two pair of eyeglasses, so respectfully solicitous was the manner of his reception. Mr. Passavant led off in one of his pompously rounded periods:

"It is a pleasure to renew the acquaintance of so presentable a young gentleman as yourself, Mr. Stennis, and to be the bearers of what will, I am sure, be most grateful tidings. Not the least item in our gratification consists in the fact that you bear a most dignified and euphonious name—one eminently fitted to grace the good fortune we are about to announce: 'Wilfrid Stennis, Esquire,'—ah!" He rolled out the full title in his best forensic manner, and our unsophisticated Wilf, who was staggered by all this unexpected homage and flattery, hardly recognized his own familiar appellation.

Here Mr. Carboy, with an impatient cough, took up the tale, as though he would say, "We have had the fancy touches and the flummery; now let's get down to business."

"The facts are briefly as follows, Mr. Stennis: This firm for many years past has numbered among its most valued clients your late lamented maternal uncle, Mr. Andrew Meleen, whose reputation in

the West was largely merged in the town named after him in the State of Nevada."

Wilfrid could not repress a gesture of surprise at the mention of old Andrew's name. Eunice was right, after all.

"Three months ago, Mr. Stennis, your uncle died, not very suddenly, but full of years, and childless. He was, I am happy to say for your sake, a very wealthy man. I had the honor to draw his last will and testament, in which he named Mr. Passavant and myself as co-executors. The estate will foot up at least twenty-five million dollars, partly in paying mining properties, but mainly in cash and available securities. Besides this principal, there is also a yearly income, at the present market values of silver and copper, of something like a million dollars. Your uncle's will makes you sole legatee, and it becomes our very pleasant duty, Mr. Stennis, to congratulate you upon your good fortune. From what we can learn of you personally, I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that this vast wealth could not have fallen into better hands."

Both partners rose to their feet at this peroration, and each grasped a hand of the dumfounded Wilfrid, who "stood speechless before them, saying never a word," vainly essaying to moisten his parched lips. Then he sat down, saying piteously:

"I'm afraid I don't quite take it all in, gentlemen! You must give me time to realize the news!"

"Oh, you will soon get used to the situation, my dear sir," said the bland and beaming Passavant, with a return to his fatherly manner.

"Surely!" echoed Mr. Carboy, with a compassionate smile. "You will be one of the richest young men of the age—twenty-five millions in realty and a yearly income of a million besides!"

It was more than poor Wilf could comprehend at a moment's notice. With these words ringing in his ears he staggered out of the office and gained the street, there to "walk it off."

V.

HORATIO PASSAVANT occupied a residence on Park Avenue, that dullest of New York's many dull up-town streets. The place and its furnishings, like their owner, were heavy, eminently respectable, pompous, and quite pretentious.

The household consisted of himself, his daughter, and his spinster sister—the latter tolerated chiefly because she made an admirable sheep-dog for the second, being conveniently deaf, quite colorless as to opinions, and capable of complete self-effacement upon occasion.

Clara Passavant, the daughter, was commonly accounted a handsome woman, of a pale, blond, stately style of beauty; she was thor-

oughly mercenary, brilliant as an icicle and nearly as cold, heartless, vain, and ambitious. Her all-consuming aim in life was to contract a splendid marriage; in her eyes money was the indispensable requisite for human happiness; and, although she probably never shaped the thought in so many words, she would undoubtedly sell herself to the highest bidder.

Father and daughter were sitting over their dessert on the evening of the day which brought to Wilfrid the tidings of his stupendous change in fortune. The scene was far as the antipodes from an humble interior over in Macdougall Street, where another and a more momentous interview was at that very moment also taking place.

"Now tell me about this Mr. Stennis of yours, papa," said Clara after the servants had retired. "Is he at all presentable?"

"Not half bad, my dear," returned the lawyer; "a trifle raw and unformed, perhaps, but under the proper tutelage I imagine he will become a very valuable adjunct to society. He is one of the richest young men in the world, remember!"

"How rich, for example?" queried Clara, absently admiring the flash and shimmer of her bracelet.

"His income from his mining properties alone is a million dollars a year, and there is a capital nest-egg of at least twenty-five millions back of that."

"A million dollars a year," mused Clara aloud; "one could support an establishment anywhere very comfortably on that!"

Her father gave vent to an exclamation that was very like a snort of disgust. "One year of his income is more than I have amassed in all my professional life!"

"When does he come into his property?" was the beauty's next question.

"Oh, practically immediately. There are but few legal formalities to be observed."

"I should think he would feel very grateful to you," continued Clara, "for rescuing him from poverty and obscurity."

"Well, you see, my dear," said Mr. Passavant, rubbing his double chin dubiously at this characteristically feminine bit of logic, "the facts being as they were, we could hardly help finding him; there was really no trouble at all; any other firm could and would have done as well. I do not exactly perceive why he should be especially grateful on that score. No doubt the young man feels kindly towards me,—I have every reason to believe that he does, in point of fact."

"What has he been doing for a living all these years?"

"His vocation has been that of a bookkeeper in a large export house down-town."

"I suppose he knows nothing whatever of society, papa? He could have no really nice people among his acquaintances?"

"Highly improbable, I should say," was the rejoinder. "I was thinking, Clara, that we might do the poor fellow a signal service by taking him up—introducing him in the right quarters, and all that sort of thing," with an airy wave of the hand.

"Very likely he gobbles his soup and eats with his knife! Do you suppose he ever walked through a cotillon in his life?" said Clara, with supercilious disdain. Her father gave a ventral chuckle.

"Come, come, my dear, we must not be too hard on young Stennis. He has really quite passable manners, and impresses me as a man who would quickly fall into civilized ways."

"Oh, you men do that better than women anyway," commented this mature girl satirically. "Has he any drawbacks in the way of detrimental relatives—any sisters?"

"He is absolutely alone in the world, my dear. He was 'the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.' His father was a civil engineer by profession."

"That's something in his favor," admitted the daughter of the house. "What is his full name, papa?"

"Wilfrid Stennis."

"Does he spell it with an 'i' or with an 'e'?"

"With an 'i'—W-i-l-f-r-i-d. Rather a well-sounding name—don't you think so?"

"Oh, it will do," said Clara indifferently.

There ensued a silence of some minutes' duration, both father and daughter being occupied with their private thoughts; yet it was even betting that each was thinking of the same thing.

"Suppose we invite him to dinner some night?" suggested Mr. Passavant at length; "just by ourselves, you know. Then you can take his measure and—er—er—form your own estimate of his possibilities."

This was precisely what the scheming Clara had been leading towards, although she knew full well that, man-like, her father would probably claim credit for the idea should the experiment turn out well.

"As you please, papa. Shall we say a week from next Wednesday?"

"The sooner the better, my dear." And so Wilfrid's social fate was settled.

In the privacy of her own room that night, before she slept, Clara Passavant went to her dainty escritoire and, taking pen and paper, wrote several times in a dashing, bold hand the words "Mrs. Wilfrid Stennis," scanning the sheet at arm's length. Then she tore the paper

into shreds, laughed softly to herself, and proceeded to make her quite elaborate toilet for the night.

Almost at the same hour another equally interesting episode of talk was in progress amid far different surroundings, and yet the subject was almost identically the same, the actors only being different.

"You see you were right, after all, dearest," said Wilf to Eunice after imparting to her in detail his wonderful news; "*it was* Uncle Andrew!"

He had gone to her at once, feeling that he must confide in somebody or his brain would burst. And who so willing a listener as the girl of his heart?

The winter twilight was shutting in; old Trevecca was not yet come home; the lamp was still unlighted, and they twain had the shabby parlor to themselves.

Eunice ignored the passing tribute to her superior insight. Her woman's vision was leaping far ahead, and although the affianced couple sat hand in hand, and Wilf was the same dear, unaffected fellow as of yore, tenderly affectionate and lover-like, Eunice felt the intangible and impending shadow of a new element in their relations. But she could not as yet define it or put her thoughts into words. She must thresh it out by herself. For neither had there as yet been sufficient time to fully adjust themselves to the novel situation.

"I'm so glad, for your sake, Wilf," she answered; "it is what you have always wished. Do you remember our talk in this very room a little while ago, and the wonderful air-castles you planned?" Wilf chuckled boyishly. "Now you can go ahead and build them all!"

"Rather say that we'll build them together!" he exclaimed loyally. "What's mine is yours, you know." He meant every word he said, but Eunice shook her head.

"What does that mean?" inquired Wilf, drawing her to him so that her head nestled on his shoulder. "Do you imagine that any amount of money can make any difference in my love for you? Why, my Eunice is worth a dozen fortunes!"

The girl suffered his caresses, and it was inexpressibly sweet to hear him talk in that strain, but there was an ominous tugging at her heartstrings. However, she would not play the part of a kill-joy at such a time.

"Thank you, Wilf," she said simply. "I know you mean it, and it is very dear and lovely of you to come to me first of all with the good news. I want you always to remember this, Wilf—that whatever happens my love for you can never, never change!"

"Nothing's going to come between us, anyway!" affirmed Wilf confidently, sealing his words with a kiss, and stifling her negative.

Before Eunice could make any further reply John Trevecca came in, and the wonderful tale had to be gone over again for his especial benefit.

"Eh, lad, but it's a mort o' money! Wha'tiver will 'ee do wi' it?"

Wilf laughed gayly. "Why, Eunice and I are going to build castles with some of it."

"And which one will 'ee live in?" queried the old man, taking him literally.

"Let me tell you one thing," said the impulsive Wilf; "wherever we are, you are going to be with us and share our good fortune."

"Nay, nay, lad. It's kindly meant, and I thank ye; but a million a year! I couldn't live up to it at my age! I'll just bide here."

It was characteristic of the simple nature of young Stennis that he went to his desk down-town the next morning as though nothing had happened overnight. In fact, on waking he found it almost impossible to realize his changed position. To his boarding-house the news had not yet penetrated, but when he arrived at the store he found the tidings ahead of him. Most of the morning dailies had more or less lengthy accounts, for Horatio Passavant had sent for the reporters, apparently creating the impression that the newly fledged millionaire was under his protecting wing.

The head of Stennis's firm came to his desk at the instant he was opening the big ledger as usual.

"We certainly did not expect to see you here this morning, Mr. Stennis. Let me congratulate you most heartily! Of course, you'll be leaving us soon?"

"Yes, I suppose so," answered Wilfrid, blushing and embarrassed. "But you see, sir, I haven't had time to get used to the thing yet, and if you don't mind I should like to hang on here for a while, anyhow."

"Certainly—just as you please." The elder man could appreciate the lad's feelings. Not so his fellow employés, who all that day and for the few days that Wilfrid did remain at his old post seemed lost in amazement that any fellow with a million dollars a year coming in should want to work at all.

But, naturally, the hour came around when Wilfrid Stennis balanced his final column of figures, and hung up his threadbare office-coat for the last time. Gradually his mind adjusted itself to the new state of affairs, but the circumstance that helped most to bring him to his bearings was the announcement by Mr. Carboy that there stood to his credit in the Chemical Bank a deposit of half a million dollars "just for present needs," the lawyer at the same time handing him a bank-book and a check-book. Then, and then only, Wilfrid Stennis felt that he had really come into his kingdom.

At once he did something for which he always thanked his good angel in after years. He rode up-town to Tiffany's, and selecting for Eunice a marquise ring composed of opals and diamonds, drew his first check to pay for it—a check that ran into four fat figures.

"It's the first of the money I've touched, dearest," he said as he placed the ring on her finger above the little engagement token she already wore. All tears and happy smiles, the girl threw her arms about his neck, exclaiming:

"Nothing you could have done would have pleased me more, you dear, thoughtful fellow! It is far too handsome for me, but I shall always love it and wear it."

In the ensuing early days Wilfrid was more than a little perplexed as to what changes he should make in his mode of life. He soon discovered what was evidently expected of him through an avalanche of circulars from house-agents, tailors, haberdashers, florists, cigar- and wine-merchants, picture-dealers, horse-marts, and carriage manufacturers, all bespeaking his custom and patronage, to say nothing of begging letters by the gross. Even a so-called College of Heraldry offered to furnish a crest and a coat of arms—for a stiff consideration in cash.

His boarding-house became simply unendurable on this account and because of the notoriety he had already gained. So by Eunice's advice he went to a good hotel, "until he could settle himself in a suitable suite of bachelor apartments," she added.

"But what do I want with a bachelor apartment?" he asked in wonder. "What I would like to do is to get married at once, and then we can look about for a proper house."

To this proposition she demurred resolutely, nor could he dislodge her. The utmost concession he found it possible to extort was that she would marry him in a year from that time—if he asked her. Pressed for a reason, she at first sheltered herself behind the feminine "because," but, driven into a corner at last, said that she wished him to enjoy his freedom under the new conditions; that he must go into gay society and see the world; she would not think of tying him down—and much more to the same effect.

Finding the girl immovable, and, moreover, tacitly confirmed in her decision by wise old John Trevecca, Wilfrid rather ruefully took her counsel as to the bachelor suite. In the selection of this and many other necessary adjuncts to his new environment he found Mr. Passavant's advice of great assistance, Phineas Carboy having returned to San Francisco.

"Everything depends upon the manner in which you start out, my dear boy," said his portly mentor with a return to the paternal manner. "In your position you cannot afford to ally yourself with

anything but the very best, from your shoemaker to your visiting-list. You must have a man, of course, and a secretary; send the applicants to me; I will sift them for you. You should have at least two equipages for town use—a hansom and a brougham, with suitable horses for saddle and harness. Do you ride or drive, Mr. Stennis?"

No, Mr. Stennis neither rode nor drove; in fact, he knew or cared very little about horses.

"Ah, then, there my daughter can be of service; she is accounted a very fine horsewoman and one of the best judges of horseflesh in the city. But you young people can talk that over together. You will naturally take an interest in all gentlemanly sports—every man of means and leisure does; but it will do no harm if you are positively identified with some particular pastime, even to the extent of making it a fad. May I inquire what is your favorite diversion?"

"Yachting, by all means," said Wilfrid.

"Excellent! Could not be better!" exclaimed Mr. Passavant. "None but a man of large resources can—ah—indulge in yachting to any extent."

"I am thinking of building a boat," said Wilfrid diffidently. "What would you advise?"

"The very thing, my boy; engage the most expensive designer and the most famous builder, and your reputation is made. An excellent notion—ah!"

"Really, my dear," said the lawyer in narrating this little Chesterfieldian episode to Clara, "I begin to have hopes of young Stennis; he is most tractable and receptive to—ah—sensible ideas."

So it came about that the rather blasé Clara anticipated with no little interest her first meeting with the new man.

Stennis had never before owned a visiting-card or donned a dress-coat, but when he stepped forward to greet her, in response to her father's introduction, as he entered the drawing-room, she decided in one sweeping glance that he was irreproachable at least in costume and manners, even if the latter were a trifle nervous. At the proper moment he offered his arm to take her in to dinner. Inwardly he was greatly perturbed, for he realized that he was on view; but Clara Passavant excelled in social tact, and, taking a liking to him from the start, before the soup was removed he was chatting with her completely at his ease. The dinner passed off quite successfully on the whole, for by dint of keeping a careful watch on what the others did he was able to avoid any glaring blunders, albeit rather bewildered at the multiplicity of glasses, and wondering at the possible correct uses of the different styles and sizes of knives and forks and spoons. But he committed no solecisms; he took wine sparingly; his little errors

might even have been ascribed to a somewhat different geographical environment by those not cognizant of his social pedigree.

"He will do!" thought Clara Passavant, and put forth all her mature powers to fascinate and dazzle her father's guest—in which aim she completely succeeded, for there is nothing more dangerous to a young man's peace of mind than a beautiful, well-gowned, and well-mannered woman of the world in full evening attire. And Clara was all of these things. Moreover, she could be engagingly gracious when she chose—and from this night on she did choose.

She found Wilfrid quickly and even cleverly responsive to the touch-and-go topics of current conversation and remarkably well-informed as to general knowledge. In truth, he was a better-educated man than her father, so far as wide and desultory reading was concerned; he had been nicknamed "the walking encyclopædia" in the old days of office and boarding-house life. Yet his mental bill-of-fare was like a "picked-up" dinner—it contained a little of everything. But if he had only known it in those early days as he came to know it later, socially this was rather in his favor than otherwise. Society, with a capital prefix, prefers to be amused rather than instructed, and barely tolerates the man who knows enough to see its blunders and not enough to keep still about them.

When Clara happened to broach the subject of music at their third or fourth meeting she found she had touched the dominant chord of Wilfrid's nature; being no mean executant herself, they at once met on common ground. She found that he had seen most of the modern operas (at a dollar admission) and some others of which she had never even heard, and he laughingly confessed to the possession of a tenor voice.

"But you know what the great Von Bulow said about tenors, Miss Passavant?"

"No; tell me, please; something spiteful, I am sure."

"Judge for yourself: he said that a tenor was a disease!"

Clara laughed. "That recalls Hervey's—was it Hervey's?—clever generalization of the human race," she said. "You know he divided us up into men, women, and curates."

"That was certainly rather severe on the gentlemen of the cloth," commented Stennis, "unless he had in mind the old saying about the last not being the least."

Upon another occasion they were discussing the feminine passion for fine clothes.

"Women dress to please themselves," valiantly asserted Clara, championing her sex.

"Are you sure?" said Stennis. "No true woman would be content with such a simple motive as that; it must be something far more complex."

"For instance?" she asked, with one of her challenging glances which dared him to do his best or say his worst.

"I think they dress to please themselves first; secondly, to please the men; and, thirdly, to make other women envious."

"For shame!" was the laughing retort, tapping him with her fan; "time enough to be cynical when you get to be as old as papa."

Such little verbal passages at arms as these—and there were many of them as time passed, for upon Stennis was conferred the freedom of the house in Park Avenue after that initial dinner—served to put them more and more at their ease and to cement their friendship. The rather shop-worn society woman of eight or ten seasons discovered a new sensation: in matching wits with Stennis she was sure to strike responsive fire in him every time, nor was it certain that in so doing her own wings were not in danger of being singed; she certainly, and perhaps unwittingly, revealed to him oftener than to others a softer, more womanly side to her nature.

On Stennis's part he ever delighted to be with her, because she possessed the happy knack of educing his brightest thoughts; she became his social mentor and the arbiter of his slowly forming tastes. He really wondered at himself, after an evening in her society, when he recalled the consumedly bright things he had said, and he began to take no little pride in his social and fashionable progress. For he was everywhere voted a success. His wealth, his pristine freshness, his total freedom from the too frequent vulgarities of the newly rich, made him everywhere welcome; he was put up at two or three good clubs; starting with a few valuable introductions from the Passavants, his circle of acquaintance widened rapidly, and not the least surprising feature of it all to Stennis was the ease with which he assumed his place among the elect of New York society. It was as though he had been to the manner born.

So the winter passed, in "high jinks and perpetual holidays," and the young spring found Wilfrid firmly seated in the society saddle; fairly launched on his career as one of the *jeunesse dorée*; popular alike with men and with women; invited everywhere, and apparently as happy as the day is long.

True, thus far he had not realized any of his pet projects, except to lay the keel of a fine schooner-yacht,—he had been too busy socially,—but there was, as he told himself, plenty of time.

Nor must it be inferred that the glamour of these newer interests completely eclipsed the memory and the influence of Eunice Trevecca. Throughout that winter Wilfrid was a constant and even a regular visitor in far-away old Greenwich.

To the girl he carried full accounts of his social progress, sketched for her his constantly widening circle of friends and acquaintances, and

spread his daily life before her like an open page. Thus far there had been no subterfuges, no secrets between them.

And if, as was to be expected, he developed a little of the exquisite in dress, and became a trifle dandified in manner, affecting or having acquired the society drawl and a new style of hand-shake, which he unsuccessfully endeavored to transplant to the arid and awkward soil of Macdougall Street, to Eunice and her stepfather he was the same old unaffected, generous Wilfrid of former days. In only one thing had he failed in perfect faith: he had never told Miss Passavant of his conditional betrothal to Eunice Trevecca—never so much as mentioned her name! Somehow Eunice divined this. True, there were excuses for him, and it was partly her fault; by her own act Wilfrid had been left foot-loose. Had it been otherwise, the chances are that he would have acquainted Clara Passavant with the true state of affairs very early in their intimacy. Later it became more difficult.

The faded old parlor and sitting-room ran riot in flowers, and many a dainty keepsake found its way to Eunice. But with a woman's inconsistency she wished with all her heart that Wilfrid had shown himself more masterful, refusing to let her put him off, even for a probationary year.

At first Wilf honestly tried to maintain the old lover-like relations, but was so uniformly though good-naturedly repulsed that at length he gave up trying. He little knew that poor Eunice cried herself to sleep the first time he omitted to kiss her good-by.

Yet it was by her own wish and mandate that matters between them took this course. Then came the frequent mention of Clara Passavant, the beautiful, the brilliant, and for the first time in her life Eunice was horribly jealous. It was no longer *Cherchez la femme*, she felt, but *La femme est trouvée*!

"And so you and this Miss Passavant are coming to be great friends?" said Eunice one night as they sat together, though not in the old familiar way.

"I wish you could meet her!" he exclaimed enthusiastically; "I feel sure you would like each other."

"What makes you imagine that?" inquired Eunice demurely, threading an obstinate needle with ostentatious care.

"Oh, because—well, partly because you are so unlike each other."

"Don't be too sure!" said Eunice vindictively. "For my part, I believe we should scratch each other's eyes out!"

Wilf looked at the usually gentle Eunice in polite astonishment. Then he laughed, for his social training had already taught him a thing or two.

"Oh, no, you wouldn't," he said confidently. "Women don't do things in that way. If you were introduced you would both take

little steps, bending forward in the latest mode; you would approach each other smiling sweetly; you'd dab her on one cheek, and she'd peck you on the other, and you would both say: 'Delighted to know you; Mr. Stennis has often spoken of you. What lovely weather we are having!'—all in the key of B-flat major with the tremolo stop 'way out.'"

Eunice could not but laugh at this clever little skit, but in her heart she adhered to the belligerent part of the programme.

"Tell me, what is she like?" she said by way of answer.

"I have just told you," rejoined Wilf; "you are complete opposites. For instance, she is very fair, you are dark; she is all artificial polish and society veneer, you are as genuine and simple as a wood-violet; she thinks of nothing but dress and money and the social whirl, of seeing and being seen, you are a perfect home-body."

"That isn't what I wanted to know," persisted Eunice. "Is she very beautiful?"

Now, women can never comprehend that a man may honestly eulogize or admire another woman from a purely impersonal standpoint, without being in love with her or even markedly attracted by her; in talking of a woman to most women, therefore, it is always safe for a man to "damn with faint praise." Here was where Wilf made a bad play.

"Why, yes," he admitted dispassionately, "I should say she was a very handsome woman. She has been perfectly charming to me all winter, and so has her father. In fact, I don't know how I should have managed if it had not been for their social endorsement."

"Is she accomplished as well as fascinating?" persisted Eunice, hugging her pain.

"In a way—yes; she is a very good pianist; she can talk interestingly on most subjects; she has been everywhere and seen everything. She tells me I must go abroad."

"Isn't that what you always wanted to do?" queried Eunice, her head bent over her work to hide the tears that would come.

"Certainly. I am thinking of taking the yacht across with a party this summer; the Passavants have promised to go. And that reminds me, Eunice: the launching takes place next week. Won't you and your father run down to Bristol? How would you like to christen her? You may if you want to."

"No, thank you," said Eunice very stiffly; "you would better ask Miss Passavant." And to Wilfrid's astonishment, John Trevecca coming in at that instant, the girl plead a headache and abruptly said good-night.

In the seclusion of her own chamber she threw herself on the little white bed, sobbing out the words: "He has never told her! He has never told her!"

The launching took place as announced, in the presence of a gay assemblage who went to Bristol on a special train by invitation of the young nabob. Moreover, Clara Passavant broke the bottle of champagne and spoke the magic words, "I name thee Kestrel." All of which reached the eye of Eunice through the newspapers.

Wilfrid planned to sail as soon as the yacht was fitted out, and he was naturally very busy and thoroughly in his element, for he had always loved the water. He called but once on Eunice in those few weeks, but the woman-servant said she was out—which caused him to wonder if the conventional tarradiddle was becoming acclimated in Macdougall Street. He decided to write to her, but kept putting it off, until at last he grew a little bit ashamed of his neglect, and so made bad worse by writing not at all.

On the tenth of May the Kestrel set sail for the Azores with her owner and a party of congenial friends aboard, and for two years his native land managed to get along without Wilfrid Stennis, although far away in the West men were toiling and moiling, piling up more millions to replenish those squandered or spent in the gay quest of pleasure.

VI.

WHEN Roger Hews was dispatched to Pennsylvania as the confidential agent of Carboy, Passavant & Cozine to verify the strange story told by Andrew Meleen on his death-bed he unearthed a far more curious and complicated series of episodes, so unusual and unexpected as to suggest to his fertile and not over-scrupulous mind a plot by which the knowledge thus gained might be turned to his own advantage in several ways. Briefly told, this is what he discovered after much painstaking piecing together of fact and inference:

When Minna Meleen found herself, as she supposed, deserted by her husband so soon after their marriage, unable to bear the taunts and gibes of the village women, she left the outskirts of Hazleton, then little more than a hamlet, and tramped across the mountains to Nanticoke. Here, being a complete stranger, she resumed her maiden name of Minna Tod, passing herself off as a widow, and making a living by sewing and doing chores. Here a daughter was born to her. A year and more had elapsed since leaving Hazleton, when seemingly authentic tidings reached her that her husband, Andrew Meleen, had been killed in battle. So to her the erstwhile fiction became a cruel and bitter fact.

Believing herself a free woman, and being still young and handsome, her scolding tongue and fiery temper somewhat cooled by her misfortunes, she permitted herself to be once more wooed and won, this time by an artisan named John Trevecca.

In less than a year she presented Trevecca also with a daughter,

but this time she died during her accouchement, and the infant with her, and was buried in Nanticoke, exactly as Roger Hews reported. This event it must have been which reached the ears of Andrew Meleen, denuded of the one vital fact that Minna had married again and that his own child still lived.

To the day of her death John Trevecca supposed she had been really a widow when she married him—as, of course, did Minna herself. The only deception she had practised consisted in the concealment of her true name.

When Minna died, John Trevecca cherished her first-born, the little Eunice, as his own, bringing her up under his name, giving her a good education, even sending her to a country seminary for a couple of terms; then, in turn, he moved away, and no one in Nanticoke heard of him for many years.

So much of the past Roger Hews had discovered when he returned to San Francisco to report to Mr. Carboy. We have seen how he suppressed the essential facts, completely misleading the astute lawyer. When he went East for good it was with the idea of tracing John Trevecca and his stepdaughter. He hoped that the girl still lived, and that, fortified with proofs of the foregoing facts, he could eventually produce her as the rightful heir to the millions of old Andrew Meleen—for that she was his legitimate daughter, born in lawful wedlock, no one would be able to gainsay in the face of the evidence he could produce.

In one of two or three ways Hews proposed to turn this valuable secret to his own profit: If the girl were alive and unmarried and in humble circumstances, he would try to make her his wife and divulge the truth afterwards: in which case Roger Hews would have somewhat to say concerning the spending and scattering of old Andrew's hoarded wealth. If the girl were already wedded to another, then he hoped to find his account by selling her and her husband the story on the best terms possible. Thirdly, if neither of these things were the case, then he could find a market for his wares with Wilfrid Stennis, who might be expected to pay handsomely for the suppression of the secret, thus insuring to himself a clear title to the property.

It was a clear case of "Heads I win, tails you lose!" So far as he could see, only one contingency could defeat the major plot—the daughter of Minna and Andrew Meleen might be dead.

Meantime, he had no objection whatever to letting a wrongful heir enter into possession. The information he possessed would have a sure and certain market value in any case.

It took Roger Hews three or four months to trace the migrations of John Trevecca, covering, as they did, a period of ten or twelve years. But run him to earth at last he did, and found to his joy that

Eunice was very much alive, and well worth winning for her own sake. But one other thing was not so much to his liking—the discovery that Eunice and the man in possession had been friends for years, and were even then supposed to be engaged lovers. This was an adverse conjunction which the astutest mind could not have imagined or foreseen—indeed, it was of a piece with all the other strange factors in the case.

However, Roger Hews was content to play a waiting game. He was very careful to keep out of Wilfrid's way, but he lost no time in making the acquaintance of Eunice and her stepfather, and at the time of Wilfrid's departure for Europe Roger had been for some months on terms of easy acquaintance with both of them. He attended the same church as Eunice, he joined the ward club and the lodge to which Trevecca belonged, and among the decent denizens of Macdougall Street passed as a writer, a character which was not belied by appearances, owing to his quiet, steady demeanor and his careful acting and dressing of the part.

Nor did it take Hews long to discover that there was a little rift in the lute between Eunice and Wilfrid. This exactly suited his book. Perhaps a less observant person could have foretold such an outcome of their odd romance. Anyway, this was Roger's opportunity. As Wilfrid's visits became fewer, and the coast more clear, the other took to dropping in of an evening, ostensibly to see John Trevecca; or he would contrive to meet Eunice at church and prayer-meeting and walk home with her. He even escorted her to the Park, to the theatre, and to some popular concerts.

Never by word or look or action did he hint of any knowledge of her acquaintance with Wilfrid Stennis. She, on her part, from motives of pride and delicacy forebore to allow Stennis's name to pass her lips; old John Trevecca was naturally close-mouthed about his own or his daughter's affairs. So it was a three-cornered game.

At no time is the average woman supposed to be more approachable to a determined wooer than when she has been deserted or deems herself forsaken by another man. In proportion as the wound is deep, so is the healing process possibly hastened if there be a sure and certain consolation at hand. But Eunice Trevecca was not an average woman; her heart did not always rule her head.

When nearly a year had passed without so much as a line from Wilfrid, Eunice deemed herself indeed forgotten. What she had feared and foreseen, she told herself, was come to pass; and "that woman," as she termed Clara Passavant in her thoughts, had probably won him away from his early affection by her wiles and her brilliant social attainments.

"I suppose we are not in his class any longer," she said to herself

bitterly. "But she will never make him happy; all she cares about is the money."

She did not, nor would not, blame Wilfrid; it was all "that woman's" evil doings. Yet she tried her best to think of him as dead to her, and to face the fact that henceforth she must piece out her life alone. But it was a sorry attempt.

Eunice had not been a woman had she failed to see the drift of Master Roger's comings and goings. Hers was too sweet a nature not to feel honored by what she supposed was the unselfish admiration of a passably good man. He had apparently succeeded in ingratiating himself with her stepfather, and his companionship proved a rather welcome diversion in those dark days. But she knew his love-quest was hopeless, and discouraged his more marked attentions, for she told herself her heart was dead.

So when Roger Hews pressed his suit—he never made love to her as Wilf had done—she was ready with her answer.

"It cannot be, Mr. Hews," she said, as they stood in the dim old parlor. "I esteem and admire you as a friend, but—I shall never marry."

"Perhaps I have been too hasty," said Roger suavely. "In time, possibly, you will like me better. Let me still be your friend and comrade. I will not recur to this without your permission, but some day I shall ask you again."

She shook her head in token that his was a forlorn hope, but she was too kind-hearted to inflict a hurt where she could avoid it.

"On those conditions, then," she said, "we may still be friends; but I shall never change my mind."

"Cursed upstart!" Hews muttered when he found himself on the wrong side of the door. "She loves him still! I wish he would get married himself; then, my lady, perhaps you'd sing another song!"

VII.

JADED and surfeited, ready to cry "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," Wilfrid Stennis returned to his native land after two years of kaleidoscopic experiences in the chief capitals of the Old World. He had plunged into the vortex of "life," only to be flung out of the worry and whirl as a spent swimmer is spewed out on the sand by some mad-rushing breaker.

Into those two years he greedily crowded together enough vicissitudes to last another and better-seasoned mind and body a decade at least. Perhaps his almost total lack of previous social training and preparation led the sooner to inevitable satiety; it was like a starveling gorging himself on a twelve-course dinner of highly spiced and seasoned viands.

Certain it is that his one overmastering desire at last took the form of an acute nostalgia—a longing to get away from glittering generalities and sybaritic luxury and settle down somewhere to a life of plain and polished ease.

So he left the Kestrel to follow at leisure—the original yachting party was disbanded long since—and came home by the Oregon on one of the last trips of that doomed greyhound of the ocean.

In appearance Stennis was not much changed, save for a little more fulness of face and figure, a rather tired look about the eyes, and—what was more noticeable—just a suspicion of grayness in the hair around the temples. And this at thirty! In manner he had certainly improved; you would have at once set him down as a well-trained and well-groomed man of the world.

An intense and overweening craving for simpler manners and homelier fare led his steps straight from the pier to the little house in Macdougall Street, around which were clustered by far the pleasantest memories he had ever known.

Eunice was at home, and herself opened the door, so no retreat, no denial, was possible.

"Why!—Mr. Stennis!" she cried in genuinely astonished accents. In the total surprise of the moment it was all she could find to say.

As he stepped across the threshold his gaze sought hers, but in the act of shaking hands—apparently a merely perfunctory ceremony on the girl's part—her eyes were veiled, and the sole token of emotion she betrayed was a little tell-tale red signal-flag in her usually olive-pale cheeks.

"Have you no word of welcome for me, Eunice?" said Wilfrid reproachfully.

"Surely!" was the answer. "We—I—am glad to see you back safe and sound and looking so well. When did you arrive?"

"Scarcely an hour ago. I came straight here."

During the voyage across Wilfrid had in divers ways pictured to himself this meeting. There was to be a sort of killing of the fatted calf, although in no sense did he regard himself as enacting the role of the prodigal—he had been made too much of while abroad for that. And though he knew in his heart of hearts that he had probably forfeited all right thereto, in fancy he had dwelt with an inward glow over the glad greeting which Eunice was to extend; he had even pictured to himself in a hazy way her flinging herself into his arms and with tear-wet cheeks taking him to herself again. But this commonplace, every-day "How-de-do, Mr. Stennis?" and the total absence of emotion, grave or gay, cool or ardent, was like passing at one step from the hot sunshine of the plains of Lombardy to the ice-crowned steeps of the Alpine summits beyond.

"That was very kind of you," said Eunice as she led the way to the old familiar room, only a little dimmer and duller than usual, but nevertheless to Wilfrid a very haven of restfulness. "Father will be delighted to see you and hear all about your travels."

"And what about yourself, Eunice?" said Wilf, moving closer to her, but not venturing to touch her, although he was possessed with an unutterable longing to take her to his heart as of yore, as she stood there in her fresh, cool beauty—a little more mature, a little more sedate and womanly, and to his tired spirit infinitely grateful and soothing.

"Of course I am glad to see you," she said in quietly level tones, lifting her eyes to his as she spoke with a steadfast and limpid regard, their depths unstirred by any sign of deeper feeling within. If her heartstrings vibrated little or much, she had herself wonderfully in hand.

Stennis turned away with a half-petulant sigh and dropped into a chair—his old, favorite seat.

"I have been several kinds of a fool since I saw you," he was beginning, when Eunice broke in banteringly:

"Oh, pray don't begin your confessions so soon. I would rather hear about the pleasant things you have seen and done!"

Stennis looked at her in wonderment. This was a new Eunice, altogether out of his ken. She had seated herself by the window, and was already busied over a bit of delicate drawn-work which the slightest tremor of hand or dimness of eye might ruin. Her coolness was disappointing, even aggravating. In what school had she acquired this insouciance of voice and manner?

Clearly, he thought, she had not been wearing her heart away during his absence. Perhaps there was a successor to her favor, he reflected jealously. He recalled in a flash the many women who had almost flung themselves at his head during the past twenty-four months, among them an Italian princess and the daughter of an English duke; yet here was this girl, child of a workingman, to whom he had once made love and been engaged, treating him as indifferently as she might a clerk in the corner-grocery! He set his jaw hard in chagrin, forced to accept the situation as he found it, yet with a curious tightening around the chest.

But then and there he registered a mighty oath that he would try to win her back if he had to begin his wooing all over again.

Thoughts fly quickly as Ariel's girdle, and Eunice's last words had scarcely ceased vibrating on the air than Wilfrid found himself replying, with a smile,—

"Must I begin at the very beginning, like the children?"

"From the very 'be-commencement,' as one of my little Sunday-school tots says."

"Well, then—oh, hang it all, Eunice, I can't begin in cold blood in that way! Ask me questions—give me a start. You know I never was famous for ticketing and labelling my thoughts."

Eunice laughed quietly—a deliciously low ripple of merriment.

"All right!" she exclaimed, with just a trace of her old occasionally piquant manner. "But if I put any impertinent queries, Mr. Stennis, you may decline to answer on the usual legal grounds."

"And what may they be?" inquired Wilfrid, whose wits were certainly not at their sharpest that day.

"On the score that the answer would degrade or incriminate you," she retorted saucily.

Wilfrid drew himself up stiffly, seeing which Eunice hastened to say contritely:

"There! I didn't mean that, Mr. Stennis, but you gave me too easy an opening."

"But if you insist on calling me Mr. Stennis," put in the instantly mollified Wilfrid, making the most of this momentary softening in manner, "I sha'n't be able to go on at all. It was always 'Wilf' and 'Eunice' before I went away."

"Ah," said the girl in low and vibrant tones, "we used to do a great many foolish things in those days. We were both rather silly, I dare say. Now you are a man of the world and I am getting to be an old maid, so we must put all nonsense behind us."

"How can she speak that way?" mused Wilfrid. "'Nonsense,' she calls it! Well, perhaps it was." Then aloud,—

"It was the sweetest time of my life—I have found that out!" he said fervently.

"You did not think so then!" Eunice flashed back at him with a woman's fondness for a lively retort. She could have bitten out her tongue the next instant, for she was determined that the conversation should not take a sentimental or a reminiscent turn if she could help it.

"That was one of the fool things I started to confess a while ago," said Stennis ruefully, pulling at his fair mustache.

"Confessions are expressly prohibited," said Eunice quickly. "Now I am going to begin my cross-examination. In the first place, are we to congratulate you?"

"For what?" asked Wilfrid blankly.

"Upon your engagement or your marriage to Miss Passavant—I do not know which, not having heard from you,"—this with much sweetness,—"but the papers have had you engaged and married three or four times."

"Papers be ——!" exclaimed Wilfrid. "I tell you, Eunice, that's all off. There never was a word of truth in it, anyway. Why, I

haven't seen Clara Passavant for six months!" In his earnestness he leaned towards her, half out of his chair.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," murmured Eunice, bending over her work.

"Are you? And why, pray?"

"Because it always seemed to me a very wise arrangement for both of you. She has beauty, refinement, and social position; you have the money. What more could the world ask?"

There! it was out, and Eunice felt that she could breathe more freely. Again and again during the past two years she had schooled herself to make some such indifferent speech as this.

Wilfrid gasped. This was the girl who had promised always to wear his ring; who had assured him that whatever happened she would never cease to care for him!

"By Jove!" he thought, "she's hard as nails! Never gave her credit for that sort of thing!" But aloud he said, with some show of dignity,—

"You seem to have left one item out of your calculations, Eunice."

"And what may that be?" inquired the girl, holding her work up to the light and inspecting it very earnestly.

"I didn't care for her in that way."

"Poor thing!" Eunice retorted mockingly. "How dreadful! Did she ever find it out?"

"I don't know and I don't care!" exclaimed the baited Wilfrid. "Let me tell you one thing, Eunice: You are——"

"Now, please don't!" exclaimed Eunice, elevating an admonitory finger. "I can imagine just what you are going to say, and I'd rather you wouldn't. Are you ever going to begin on those adventures of yours? Think of Othello."

"What has he got to do with it?"

Eunice sighed in simulated distress. "It's very easily seen that foreign travel has not broadened your mind to the extent you hoped it would. That, sir, is a Classical Allusion!"

"I can't see what you are driving at!" protested Wilfrid. "You are not a bit as you used to be. I don't know what to make of you!"

"What went ye out for to see?" quoted Eunice, looking at him quizzically, but Stennis chose to ignore this remark.

"Why are you so hard and so bitter—that's what I want to know?"

At this unjust accusation Eunice rose and confronted him, her bosom rising and falling tempestuously at last.

"Hard and bitter, am I?" she repeated, in deep chest tones, and moving towards the door. If the interview were prolonged another moment she felt that she would collapse.

"Hard and bitter!" she reiterated. "Perhaps I am. You made me so! How do you like your work?" And she fled from the room.

Wilfrid found his hat and then the street in dazed surprise. He never dreamed that the sweet and even-tempered Eunice could harbor or give vent to such intensity of feeling. Too late he saw what he had lost. Was it too late to retrieve that loss?

He made his way up-town to the rooms which had been retained for him during his absence, and where by this time his man might be expected to have everything in order. Here too he found his secretary with a sheaf of letters wanting replies, especially a lengthy communication from Carboy, Passavant & Cozine beseeching his personal attention to sundry matters connected with his vast properties. Despite his lavish expenditure, he had not disbursed half his income; consequently there was always a surplus of cash on hand demanding investment. Mr. Passavant had evidently seen his name among the arrivals and lost no time in trying to get at him.

"Tell old Passavant to go to the devil!" exclaimed Stennis irritably. "Or—no—I'll go there myself—I mean, I'll run down-town in the morning. Write and tell him so, please. I want to be alone this evening."

Thus left to himself, he extinguished the lights and went to the balconied open window commanding a view of the Riverside Drive and the silver Hudson. Here he sat smoking and "taking stock" of himself until the night was far spent.

The inventory was not a very satisfactory one from any point of view. On the whole, as he frankly owned introspectively, reverting to the phraseology of the old commercial days, there were too many bad or doubtful accounts on the ledger. Taking the giddy whirl of the past three years in review, he was fain to confess that he had been considerable of a failure.

Where were his former roseate dreams of serene and supreme happiness which were to become concrete realities with the possession of boundless wealth? True, he had achieved many things which none but a spoiled darling of fortune could have accomplished. He had quaffed the cup of pleasure to the dregs; he had seen and tasted—merely tasted—gilded vice; there his innate cleanness of nature and clarity of mind had kept him from any great damage to health or reputation. But that sort of thing was only negative virtue, and he knew it.

If he had wrought no serious harm to others or to himself, he had, of an equal surety, accomplished no good. There must be something in life for him beyond mere spending, eating, drinking, and wearing fine clothes. But where and how to find it? Not among the fashionable and frivolous folk with whom he had cast his lot hitherto, nor among women of the type of Clara Passavant—though she was not by any means the worst product of her guild. Indeed, come to think of

it, she was "the best of the bunch." Her influence, on the whole, had made for good; looking backward, he could see how much he really owed her; she had molded him and made a man of him in those early days of his new-found riches, when, without her aid, or in the hands of a woman of commoner clay, he might have gone to perdition.

Yes, he had every reason to think kindly of Clara Passavant. He might have married her—he could now if he chose to say the word. Perhaps that would be the best thing that could happen to him! Eunice had cast him off,—unjustly, of course,—weakly ready, in his chagrin, to blame someone else for his own short-sightedness.

He had said that he did not love Clara, which was perfectly true. Was there in the world any such thing as love—real, pure, disinterested love? Once upon a time he had thought so—but now?

Too late he discerned that in letting Eunice Trevecca slip through his fingers he had lost what might have proved a sheet-anchor for happiness. With her by his side as guide, counsellor, friend, and wife, what might he not have accomplished! Was it too late? It looked that way.

Nevertheless, the next night found him in Greenwich Village again. This time old John Trevecca was at home, and the evening passed in recounting his adventures and in going over some choice photographs he had gathered together for Eunice. But not for an instant did she permit herself to be alone with him; and although he called again and again, on many successive days and nights, he never succeeded in seeing her tête-à-tête.

How was he to establish himself anew in her good graces, how win back the footing he had spurned, if she never gave him the chance? And so, for want of anything better, and to stifle regret, he took up the gay round and routine of social diversion and fashionable fribble where he had left them off two years before.

One other thing he did, however. On a beautiful site, near what is now called Cathedral Heights, he began the erection of a dwelling which would embody all his old ideals of what such a place should be, enriched with the newer ideas picked up during his travels.

And to Clara Passavant and her friends it began to seem as if, after all, she might, at some day not far distant, become the mistress of this worthy addition to the millionaire houses of New York.

VIII.

ONE morning in the early fall, a few weeks after the return of Stennis from abroad, Roger Hews called at his rooms bearing a letter of introduction from Horatio Passavant. It ran:

"MY DEAR MR. STENNIS: This will commend to your consideration Mr. Roger Hews, who prefers to do his own explaining as to the object of his waiting upon you. I am requested to say, however,—and it gives me great pleasure to do so,—that Mr. Hews has upon more than one occasion acquitted himself intelligently and faithfully in matters of moment entrusted to him by this firm, and I believe him to merit the utmost confidence.

"Most truly yours,

"HORATIO PASSAVANT."

"What can I do for you, Mr. Hews?" inquired Stennis genially, dragging a chair forward.

"I understand that your secretary is about to leave you, Mr. Stennis, and I venture to make application for the post. It occurred to me that a personal call would be more satisfactory all around. I hope I'm not too late?"

"On the contrary, you are the first in the field. How did you know that there was to be a vacancy?"

"From Mr. Passavant."

"I see," said Wilfrid. "It was through him that Mr. Jocelyn came to me three years ago; if he sends me as good a man this time, I shall not complain."

Hews bowed. In dress and deportment—the former severely business-like, the latter quiet and sedate—he seemed outwardly all that could be desired.

Stennis turned to the letter of recommendation, slightly at a loss what to say next. This man was evidently some years older than himself, and no doubt eminently respectable.

Despite his experience of the respect and deference everywhere elicited by his wealth and social standing, Stennis had never quite gotten over a slight feeling of embarrassment and shamefacedness when dealing with those of his fellow-men who might in any sense be considered as dependents. An acute observer would have said that this hang-dog trait was convincing proof that he had not been born to the purple. Your titled Englishman, for instance, has no compunction or hesitation in ordering his servants around; they are to him, and always have been, simply so much furniture.

"I suppose I ought to ask you some questions, Mr. Hews," said Stennis, with a whimsical but engaging little smile, "but for the life of me I don't know where to begin."

"I am entirely at your service," murmured the irreproachable Hews, who was on his good behavior.

"Well—er—what experience have you had? I presume that's a fair inquiry?" said Wilfrid tentatively.

"Oh, certainly, Mr. Stennis. To be frank with you, I have never occupied exactly the position of a private secretary, but I have been

employed at various times in a confidential capacity by several men of affairs, and the firm of Carboy, Passavant & Cozine has also used me in some delicate matters. I may say without hesitation that I am thoroughly familiar with the duties of such a place."

Wilfrid nodded. "Mr. Passavant transacts all my weightier business, you know; you would look after my private correspondence, keep me posted as to social engagements, go through the begging-letters,—there's a devil of a lot of them, I can assure you,—purchase supplies, and pay the bills."

"I understand," said Hews confidently.

"Then there's the new house; there's a confounded amount of petty detail connected with that which will fall to you."

Hews waved his hand with a gesture of complete assurance. "Give yourself no uneasiness, Mr. Stennis. I believe I can do all these things to your satisfaction."

"Well," said Wilfrid impulsively, "I rather like you, Mr. Hews, and I don't see why we shouldn't suit each other. I'll talk it over with Passavant and let you know."

"Very good, sir," said Roger, rising to go, hat in hand. "There is one thing I should prefer you to hear from me direct—Mr. Passavant will probably mention it: Although a stranger to you personally, I know something about your affairs, for I was the man sent to Pennsylvania by Mr. Carboy to verify certain facts connected with your late uncle's early life."

"The devil you were!" exclaimed Stennis, looking at Hews with accrued interest. Then, after a moment's reflection, he continued,—

"I don't see why that should make any difference, do you?"

"Not at all," was the reply. "I should serve you none the less faithfully, Mr. Stennis."

"All right," assented the latter. "I'll let you hear from me one way or the other, Mr. Hews."

Hews bowed, and had his hand on the doorknob when Wilfrid said:

"By the way, it just occurs to me: Mr. Jocelyn is leaving because he is going to get married. I hate these changes, anyway. Pardon me—but have you—er—er—any similar intentions, Mr. Hews? It's none of my business, perhaps?"

For an instant the astute Roger half suspected some hidden or covert meaning in this sudden question; but a glance at Wilfrid's quite tranquil countenance quickly dispelled the idea. It was merely a chance shot. With a grave smile he answered,—

"Not the slightest!"

As he descended in the elevator he reflected that Stennis was not

likely to hear any tell-tale contradictions of this statement from Eunice Trevecca, and even a better man than Roger Hews could have justified the misleading answer by appealing to the reply made by Sir Philip Francis when asked point-blank if he had penned certain notorious letters: "If I had, you know, I should certainly say I had not!"

A variety of motives impelled the schemer to take this plunge into the enemy's country.

First and foremost was the feeling that by being on the spot he would be able to keep in touch with the property which he had almost come to regard as his own.

Then too he fancied that the coveted position would enable him to detect any signs of renewed tenderness between Wilfrid and Eunice; while equally, of course, if Stennis were contemplating any other union matrimonial he would know of that.

In fact, by this move, should it prove successful, his position would be like that of a man in the centre of a seesaw plank; he could depress or elevate either end at will.

Roger Hews was one of those men to whom power, or the knowledge of power, is inexpressibly sweet. The assurance that he held his unsuspecting adversary in the hollow of his hand, that if he chose he could at any time oust him from his high estate in half a dozen words, was to him meat and drink.

In less than a week he received a note from Stennis definitely engaging him, and requesting that he begin his new duties forthwith. So Roger Hews took up his residence at "The Albany," and speedily became adept in his work, as well as possessed of most of his employer's little secrets.

The winter came and went without bringing much change in the outward relations of the chief personages of this tale. The walls of the new mansion on Riverside were steadily rising, and the envious heart of Roger Hews was made sick at the thought of the enormous sums that were being lavished thereon.

"Confound him!" he growled in his gizzard a dozen times a day. "He little thinks whose money is being squandered! I'll give him a little more rope, and then——"

For Hews had come to hate Wilfrid with a blind, unreasoning hatred which, in a less cold-blooded man, would have endangered by precipitancy his ultimate plans and plots. Strange to say, the unconscious Wilfred rather liked his taciturn and methodical secretary.

"He's a perfect gourmand for work," said the young Croesus one day to Mr. Passavant; "I can't find him enough to do."

But Roger was busy in his own ferret-like way. That Eunice Trevecca was secretly pining her heart away for Wilfrid Stennis became perfectly clear to Hews the unsuccessful. Since the former's return the girl had grown perceptibly thinner and paler, her step had lost its pretty quickness, her manner lacked its old-time buoyancy and sprightliness.

The certainty that his diagnosis was right fairly infuriated the rival suitor. Originally he had approached the girl in a spirit of sordid speculation, with only the counterfeit pretence of love upon his lips. But as the womanly sweetness and the unattainable nature of the prize became apparent, so did his feelings change, and he who came to barter with a woman's heart remained to beg for a kindly glance, to yearn for a word that might give him hope. For Hews was deeply, passionately smitten with Eunice Trevecca. To such a pass had it come with him that to win her he would have been willing to forego the golden fruit of all his plottings and schemings.

Again and again did he try to approach the forbidden topic of his love, but always with the same quiet avoidance of it on her part. He had promised to respect her wishes, but the floodgates of passion were at length overflowed, and he resolved to know his fate once and for all.

To help his cause somewhat he sent Eunice anonymously a marked copy of a society paper which authoritatively announced the engagement of Clara Passavant and Wilfrid Stennis, with the added intelligence that the wedding would take place at Easter. This time there was no mistake—the gossips were right.

On various occasions throughout the winter Wilfrid had tried to see Eunice—sometimes successfully, but more often failing—in a sincere endeavor and desire to renew their old footing. But the girl met his advances with such coldness and palpable indifference that at length he came to the sorrowful conclusion that she was hopelessly offended with him.

Then, and then only, did he put the momentous question to the daughter of the house of Passavant, and was at once accepted. She had been ready to yield months ago; in her inmost heart she wondered why the man had hesitated so long.

When Eunice received the paper which Hews so thoughtfully sent she happened to be alone. She could not help seeing the paragraph, encircled as it was with broad blue pencil-marks. As she took in the sense of the printed lines her lip curled scornfully, as she said, half-aloud,—

“I hope she is satisfied now!”

Quite on the impulse of the moment she ran to her little desk—one of Wilf's keepsakes—and rapidly penned this note:

"DEAR MR. STENNIS: Some kind friend has just sent me a copy of the *Home Journal* containing the announcement of your engagement and forthcoming marriage. As one of your oldest friends I want to be among the first to congratulate you, and to offer my sincerest wishes for your lasting happiness.

"Cordially yours,

"EUNICE TREVECCA."

She dashed off the address, and with her own hands posted it forthwith at the box on the corner. Then she ascended slowly to her room, locked the door, and had what women call "a good cry." But when old John came home that night she was able to tell him the news with complete composure, save for a tiny dash of red in either cheek.

"Eh, lass," he said, getting up from his chair, going to her side at the other end of the table, and taking her face between his horny hands, "thou'st gotten tha' dose, but doan't 'ee fret; tha' ither 'ooman has na' landed 'im yet, an' she will na'." He sealed the words with a hearty, compassionate kiss, and went heavily back to his seat, chuckling to himself. But Eunice shook her head hopelessly.

"It's all the fault of that horrid money, father," she said.

"There's nowt ta matter wi' th' lad, girly; niver forget that. He'll win oot!" affirmed the old man, emphasizing his opinion with his knife and fork in the air.

"I wish I could think so," sighed Eunice, smiling wanly, "but it's no use; he will never come back to us now—it has gone too far!" And so it seemed, for with his engagement to Miss Passavant openly announced it looked as if Wilf were indeed irrevocably lost. Then her pride came to her rescue, and with some attempt at abandon Eunice exclaimed:

"I don't care! I sent him my congratulations to-day!"

"Did 'ee, now! That was plucky of 'ee," was her father's sententious answer.

The judicious Hews permitted a full day to intervene before following up the news with a call in Macdougall Street. Now, if ever, he thought, the girl might be ready to listen to reason; he counted not a little upon Eunice's womanly pique and pride, which might tempt her to show the recalcitrant Wilfrid that two could play the same game, and that she was not the one to wear the willow for another woman's fiancé. Women—and men likewise—have been known to marry for spite and repent at leisure.

It was Roger's cue, as usual, to pretend to be wholly ignorant of the little tragedy going on behind the scenes. Eunice was totally unaware of the fact that he was in the employ of her old lover, and she thought she had sufficiently masked her own feelings.

When Hews came in that evening Eunice was alone, and intuitively

felt that a crisis was impending. For millennial ages women have been pitting subtle wit against brute strength, developing a sixth sense which detects immediately and indubitably the benign or the malign designs of the opposite sex.

But Roger was too clever to unmask his batteries at once. He had so carefully nursed his intimacy with this girl all these months, had been outwardly so chivalrously friendly and considerate, that he was usually a welcome caller. He was a good talker; he took care to be wise in the news of the day; and knowing more about Eunice than she knew of herself he was astutely able to interest her in many rather unexpected ways. But for the bugbear of his hopeless attachment lurking in the background the girl would have been at all times care-free in his society—that is, as long as he kept the one forbidden subject bottled up under his waistcoat.

To-night, however, she detected a tenseness of latent purpose in Roger Hews which doubtless he flattered himself was wholly hidden, and which certainly his first words did not reveal, for his talk was all about the great railroad strike then raging.

As the evening wore on, and John Trevecca failed to make his usual nine-o'clock appearance, Hews inquired,—

"Where is your father to-night?"

"I think he has gone upstairs," said Eunice, who had been hoping this question would not be asked. "In fact," she went on hurriedly, "I am quite worried about him; he has taken a heavy cold, and his asthma is always worse at such times."

"I do not wish to alarm you," said Hews with a well-simulated note of sympathy in his voice, "but I have noticed that he is aging rapidly; he is not the man he was a year ago."

"Oh, do you really think that?" exclaimed Eunice regretfully, and quick to take alarm. "He is perhaps not as vigorous as he used to be, but I hope he will be spared to me for many, many years! He is my only relative in the world; if I should lose him"—and the ready tears came into her eyes for the sole parent she had ever known.

"It is nothing serious, I guess," said Roger with off-hand, soothing conviction; "but your father ought to be enjoying a leisurely old age; at his time of life he should not have to work."

Eunice nodded her head in quick assent.

"So I have told him, Mr. Hews, again and again. But he persists in saying that he must toil on at the shops in order that he may keep adding to the little pile of savings which is to save me from want when he is dead and gone."

"That is a noble object," said Hews with real sincerity, "but you have it in your power to render all that labor unnecessary, and to make your father comfortable for the rest of his life."

"I don't see——" began Eunice, when, with a wave of color flood-

ing face and forehead, she suddenly did see. How silly and blind to give him such a good opening, she thought.

Roger Hews was quick to seize his chance—in fact, he had cleverly led up to this very point.

“At the risk of offending you, Miss Eunice,” he struck in, “I must recur to the proposal I made you once before. Marry me, and your father need not worry about his future or your own. They will both be my care then.”

“You promised——” said the girl reproachfully, but he took the words out of her mouth in his surcharge of feeling.

“I promised—I know it—never to recur to the theme so near to my heart without your permission. I have broken the promise because I can keep silence no longer. Eunice, I love you, dearly, madly, devotedly, with all the strength of a man who has never loved before. I cannot live without you, and I will not. Be my wife, Eunice, be my wife!”

His agitation was almost pitiable to see. The self-contained and calculating nature of the man seemed suddenly thawed and melted as the cold steel ingot is liquefied by the hot breath of the retort. In the intensity of his passion his voice trembled, his eyes blazed, his pale face assumed a brickish-red tinge; he left his seat and came to her side, putting one hand on her shoulder, and striving to take her unwilling fingers with the other.

All a-quiver and unstrung, he waited for her answer. With bent head and averted gaze Eunice almost turned her back on him. A wave of repulsion and disgust swept over her, for the vehement force of which she was unable to account. Not to save her father from a hundred deaths could she marry this middle-aged wooer! Never had Roger Hews been so insistent; never had she felt less like granting what he demanded.

With an effort, eluding his grasp, Eunice rose and stood facing him, the chair between them.

“I am sorry,” she said, in tones full of womanly sympathy, “that you have spoken of this again, Mr. Hews. What my answer was six months ago must be my answer still. I do not love you, and I never could love you as a woman should love the man she marries. I am loath to give you pain, but I am telling you the simple truth. I must seem cruel to be kind.”

The words were uttered with such quiet sincerity as to carry to the wretched man who heard them the conviction that the fortress of her heart was unassailable and would never be won by him. Roger Hews realized that he had failed utterly, and he threw discretion to the four winds.

“You mean you are telling me only part of the truth!” he shouted

savagely, his real nature coming to the surface under the rebuff, now that there was nothing to be gained by further disguise. "Why not make a clean breast of it, and confess that you are still infatuated with that upstart ass, Wilfrid Stennis! Where's all your maidenly pride? Don't you know that he belongs to another woman now?"

The girl winced at the cruel stab, at which evidence of the truth of his pitiful accusation Hews became even more frantic. His mask of quiet respectability was ruthlessly cast aside.

"He values you and your love about as much as one of his old shoes!" he sputtered coarsely. "He threw you over once before, and now he's done it again! He's nothing but a dirty impostor, anyway, and I'll show him up!"

Speech failed him, and he stood before her panting, choking, impotent.

Eunice Trevecca moved towards the door, and from the vantage of its opening looked him up and down in contemptuous scorn.

"I thank you, Mr. Hews," she said with cutting emphasis; "I have had a narrow escape, it seems!" and with these words she left the room.

IX.

THE preparations for the Stennis-Passavant wedding went on apace. Theirs was to be only a six-weeks' engagement, for Lent had just come in when the fateful words were spoken which in a measure set the crown of success upon the manoeuvres of Mistress Clara.

Did she love Wilfrid? In the light of events it seems extremely doubtful; that she liked and admired him we have seen; in her eyes marriage was more a matter of creature comfort than of love pure and undefiled—but little better than a social compact, in fact; so much beauty, so much refinement, so much good birth and position in exchange for so many millions of dollars.

If the possessor of the millions happened to be a very passable and presentable sort of a fellow, why, all the better. In common with nearly every other woman, Clara Passavant shone at her best during these glamorous weeks, and Wilfrid was happy—or told himself that he ought to be.

But in reality what he regarded as happiness was only a dreamy sort of nepenthe—he guessed he had done the right thing—the thing that was expected of him by Clara and all her friends. The rest didn't matter. In fact, he told himself, nothing mattered very much now that Eunice had taken herself out of his career.

The penitential season was more than half over, and there lacked but two short weeks of the wedding-day, when Roger Hews fired his mine. Patient as a ferret, he bided his time; he had scored one failure; in this second attempt to use his power there must be no

misshap or miscarriage. According to custom, he waited upon Stennis immediately after breakfast to open the mail and receive his instructions for the day.

The usual routine was gone through, and Wilfrid was about to start for his morning gallop with his fiancée in the Park when the secretary spoke:

"Can you give me your attention for a few minutes, Mr. Stennis?"

"Anything important?" quoth Wilfrid. "Can't you let it lie over? I have an appointment at eleven."

"It is most important, and it can't lie over!" said Hews truculently. Stennis eyed the man curiously; the tone verging upon the insolent, his first thought was that the immaculate Roger had been imbibing too freely. But a second glance showed that he was apparently perfectly sober.

"Well, well, man, get at it then—I am in a hurry!" exclaimed Wilfrid testily.

"Better sit down," said Hews with easy familiarity. "With your permission I'll order the horse back to the stable; I don't think you'll want to ride to-day."

So saying, he stepped to the 'phone and coolly gave the necessary instructions. Stennis, with one glove on, stood, riding-whip in hand, in dumb amazement at the consummate impudence of the man. It was a novel and not very agreeable experience. Hews, in return, scrutinized his employer with a provokingly cool stare, an unpleasant leer on his thin lips.

"Your manners are confoundedly unpleasant this morning, Mr. Hews," said Wilfrid, fingering the stock of his whip nervously. There was something covertly venomous in the attitude assumed by his secretary which made him itch to lay the heavy lash about his shoulders, as one would chastise an unruly dog.

"D' yer think so?" said the other in the most offensive tone he could muster. "I guess you'll find what I've got to say still less to y'r liking."

"That's impossible to decide as long as you sit there gibbering!" retorted Wilfrid, who was fast losing patience.

Hews snorted.

"You've had a pretty good time these three years past, haven't you?" he queried.

Stennis made no reply.

"Yes, you've had things altogether y'r own way, spending money right and left and livin' on the fat of the land."

Still no answer.

"And now y're going to get spliced, and live in a fine house, after jilting the poor girl y' once promised to marry!"

"That's an infernal lie, whoever told you so!" Wilfrid whipped out, stung at last into angry speech.

"Is it? Well, this what I'm going to tell y' is no lie—y' hear me? Y've got no more right to Andrew Meleen's millions than I have!"

Stennis started as though he had been bitten in the heel by an adder, but he controlled his voice admirably.

"Oblige me by saying that over again," he answered quietly.

"I tell yer that y've been spending money that doesn't belong to yer—not a single, solitary red cent of it! Y're no more the rightful heir of Andy Meleen than I am! Is that plain enough?"

Wilfrid stepped to the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket.

"If you are sane and sober, you'll understand that you cannot leave this room until you have proved every word—or taken the consequences," said Stennis, shaking the heavy riding-quirt suggestively.

"Oh, I know what I'm talking about," rejoined Hews airily; "my facts are all O. K."

"Let me have the facts then—not mere windy assertions," retorted the other. "I am not to be frightened or blackmailed, Mr. Hews."

"You'll get the proofs fast enough when I'm ready to give 'em out. What I want to know first is, are y' open to make a deal?"

"Explain yourself," said Wilfrid with admirable self-control.

"I say y're a fraud; that y're not the true heir; that a word from me'll turn y' out neck and crop to-morrow. Now, how much is it wuth to hush the hull thing and go on as y've been doing?"

"You must be a little more explicit, Mr. Hews," said Wilfrid gently, upon whom the conviction was forcing itself that he had to deal with a maniac whom it were best to humor. "You cannot expect me to make any arrangement—a deal, you call it—in the dark. I must first know what it is all about."

But the next words of Roger Hews dispelled this idea. The situation was actually serious, as was perhaps best indicated by the savagely insolent manner of the man.

"I've got evidence t' show—legal evidence, mind y'—that Andy Meleen left a daughter, born in lawful wedlock, although he didn't suspect it when he made his will. That girl's alive yet. Nobody knows it now but me, and I can perdooce her any minute. You've got sense enough to see that in any court of equity this knocks *you* out completely. If old Andy'd 'a' known it, you wouldn't 'a' been in it at all. These three years past you've been spendin' *her* money—money belonging to Andy Meleen's orphan daughter!"

"Go on," said Wilfrid, looking Hews squarely in the eye as the latter paused to note the effect of this knock-down statement.

"As I was sayin', not a soul knows this but me. How I know it is my business. I do know it, an' I c'n prove it. The girl doesn't dream of it, neither does her—her folks. Now, then, here you stand: You're fond of soft living—I can see that; you've got in with the smart set, you're engaged to be married to one of 'em, and you're personally liable to Andy Meleen's estate for every dollar you've spent of his money. That's so, ain't it?"

Wilfrid nodded assent, merely for argument's sake, his eyes still glued to the face of his tormentor.

"Then I ask you, as man to man: What's it worth to you to purchase this information?"

"Meaning what is it worth to me to buy your silence?" inquired Stennis.

"That's what I mean, exactly!" ejaculated Hews with cool effrontery.

Stennis studied the man's face, with its assumption of easy swagger and a gleam in the eyes of deadly hatred and malice. Then he spoke in low and level tones,—

"Before we go any further, Mr. Hews, let me have the satisfaction of telling you to your face that you are an infernal scoundrel!"

"I've been told that before in my business," retorted Hews, with a callous laugh. "It don't hurt any. The question is, Are you in on this deal? There's others'll pay for the stuff if you won't."

"You say that Andrew Meleen's daughter is living? Then she is my first cousin?"

"Of course she is!" was the off-hand answer.

"Where has she been all these years? How is it that the lawyers did not trace her in the first place?"

"Ah," said Hews, with a cunning chuckle, "that's where I come in. You didn't know you had such an uncle; she doesn't dream she had such a parent."

"Where is this lady?"

"That's my business; there's no need for you to know—leastways not yet."

"And her name?"

"That's another secret," laughed Hews, with a cunning wink.

"We'll see about that," commented Wilfrid significantly. "If what you say be true, I am probably her nearest relative. Besides, you idiot, don't you suppose I can find out after what you have told me already?"

"Perhaps you can," admitted Hews, "but you're not going to be such a ninny. You're safe in possession; if you do the right thing by me, the thing's dead and buried so far as I'm concerned.

"What is your price?" demanded Wilfrid, apparently getting down to business.

Roger Hews drew a long breath and moistened his lips nervously. It was a crucial moment.

"Now you're talkin'," he began. "I won't be too hard on you. All the same, I want a fair rake-off. Suppose we say five million dollars. Cash, mind! You'll never miss it, and that'll about set me up for life."

"I am afraid you value yourself too cheaply, Mr. Hews," said Stennis gravely.

"Don't try any of your fine sarcasms with me," growled Hews. "I know what I'm about."

"And supposing that I close with this very liberal offer of yours, what assurance have I that in the near future you will not be at my heels again with a similar demand? I've always heard that the way of the transgressor who pays hush-money is hard."

"I'll put all the proofs in your hands and you can destroy 'em," exclaimed Hews eagerly. That five millions began to take tangible shape.

"What is the nature of these so-called proofs?" inquired Stennis. Roger considered a moment, then:

"Mostly documents—copies of marriage and death certificates, and affidavits of various persons bearin' on the case. Of course, my story comes in an' makes the hull thing plain; but I shall be mum if you come to terms."

"I see," said Stennis, appearing to fall in with Roger's proposition. "But suppose you go a little further and outline the situation for me, Mr. Hews. You need not mention names or dates unless you choose. I may as well tell you plainly I am not going into this thing with my eyes shut. I must know how the case stands."

Roger Hews put on his thinking-cap. Apparently the "young upstart" was coming around, and it could do no harm to let in a little light on the past. So he said with some show of frankness:

"Well, I guess that's only fair. Here's the story in a nutshell: Nearly thirty years ago, when y'r uncle was a man of forty-five, he married a girl much younger'n himself. By all I can make out she had a pretty face an' a devil of a temper. When they'd been married a month they quarrelled, he quit her, and enlisted. The wife thought he'd deserted her, so, havin' to shift for herself, she left the place where she was known, went to another town some miles away, dropped her married name, resumed her maiden name, and passed herself off as a widder. In due course a daughter was born, and about the same time the news come to her that she really was a widow, Andy Meleen being reported as killed in battle. So bein', as she supposed, legally free, she married again, and died a year later, a second infant, also a girl, dyin' with her. Your uncle heard of this latter event and thought

it was his child that died. But this wasn't so. The Meleen girl thrived and grew up under the care of her stepfather, who never knew that his marriage to her mother was illegal, Andy bein' alive all the time."

During this interesting recital some things became clear to Stennis.

"Presumably you found out all this when, as you told me, you were sent East after my uncle's death?"

"Some of it—not all," admitted Hews with cheerful candor.

"Why did not you acquaint the lawyers with the true state of affairs?"

"Well, you see," replied Hews, with another knowing wink, "at that time I only suspicioned certain things. I meant to work up the case later. If the facts turned out to be as I thought, it looked as though a good thing might be made out of it."

"Meaning to turn it to account with me afterwards?" inquired Stennis.

"Sure!" was the unabashed answer, now that his unsuspected plot to marry Eunice had ignominiously failed.

Silence ensued, both men being busy with their thoughts; Hews looked for a quick and easy capitulation. At length Wilfrid spoke again,—

"How much time will you allow me to consider this proposal of yours?" he inquired composedly.

"Time? Why, how much time do y' want? Not a day, not an hour! It's take it or leave it, now or never!"

"I rather think I'll leave it, Mr. Hews," drawled Wilfrid, a half-smile lifting one corner of his tawny mustache.

"You'll never do it!" exclaimed the astounded and mortified Hews.

"Won't I?" queried Stennis. "You have made one grand mistake, Mr. Hews: you took me for as big a rogue as yourself! A fool I may be, but not that! Why, you despicable villain, do you imagine I would conspire with such a rat as you to defraud a woman, a motherless girl, and she my own flesh and blood?"

The tempter stared at the tempted in blank dismay. That anyone with a sane head on his shoulders should reject such a plain business proposition passed the moral comprehension of Roger Hews—a man without a conscience.

"And now I'll tell you what you may do," said Stennis, hugely enjoying the other's discomfiture. "You can go right down-town and tell Mr. Passavant what you have just told me."

"See here, Mr. Stennis," began the other, cringing, anxiously.

"Not another word on that subject, Mr. Hews," insisted Wilfrid decidedly. "But first I will trouble you to write the name and address of that young lady, my cousin."

"I'll be damned if I do!" retorted Hews passionately.

"You'll certainly be damned if you don't!" exclaimed Wilfrid grimly, clutching his riding-whip firmly and advancing towards the now trembling conspirator. "The name, you scoundrel, before I shake it out of you!"

"Oh, you know her well enough, curse you!" he blurted out. "It's Eunice Trevecca!"

Stennis fell back a pace, his face the picture of blank wonder and astonishment.

"Eunice Trevecca!" he gasped. "She my cousin and the daughter of Andrew Meleen!"

"That's what I said!" Hews answered sullenly. And then, with vehement spite, he added: "A sweet mess you've made of it in that quarter, haven't you? If you'd only played your cards right, you'd have been her husband by this time and fingered the money anyhow."

But Stennis, if he heard them, paid no attention to the words; his brain was busy taking in the full significance of this amazing climax to the strange disclosures of the day, the truth of which he could no longer doubt. However, this was no time for connected thinking; the main thing was to let the truth be known at once.

He went to the door and unlocked it, then turned to the crestfallen Hews with these words:

"Oblige me by immediately taking your story and your proofs to Mr. Passavant. He will not value your information quite as extravagantly as you do, but he will doubtless pay you something for your trouble. As for Miss Trevecca—I shall have the pleasure of breaking the news to her myself!"

X.

"I WAS never so sorely disappointed in anyone before," said Horatio Passavant pathetically to Clara after recounting to her the complete collapse of fortune that had come to Wilfrid Stennis.

"Will he have nothing at all?" inquired Miss Passavant, the money, as usual, uppermost in her mind.

"Under the will he could legally hold on to all, but if Miss Trevecca chose to contest she could probably break it, seeing that the instrument was executed under a total misapprehension on the part of the testator. But Stennis insists upon relinquishing everything—quite quixotically, as I told him; but he is obdurate. He says it is what Andrew Meleen would have wished, and declares he is going to earn his own living once more."

"I admire him for that," said Clara, with a half-sigh.

"What shall you do, my dear?" inquired the lawyer anxiously.

"Do?" was the weary answer. "Nothing. Mr. Stennis has written me a note saying that under the circumstances he restores me my freedom."

"Very proper, I am sure," said her father.

"You must take me away to Europe at once, papa; it will be all over town in twenty-four hours, and I will not permit myself to be commiserated or made the recipient of polite condolences."

"Perhaps that would be the best thing," assented the old worldling. "Carboy is coming on, and I can get him to take charge of the office for a while."

Clara had her way, as usual, and thus escaped much of the gossip anent the breaking-off of the marriage. A year later she married a Russian count twice her age, and New York society knew her no more.

It was even as lawyer Passavant had said. Wilfrid chivalrously refused to touch another dollar of Andrew Meleen's money!

The interview between him and Eunice Trevecca, though very brief, was a touching and a trying one. Acting on one of those boyish impulses which will never leave him, and actuated by an exalted idea of making restitution and doing penance, he rode and walked straight to Macdougall Street after leaving Roger Hews.

He found Eunice in the old parlor, but not alone. John Trevecca was now confined to the house, and only ventured out on very fine days. The girl was bending over him, arranging his pillows, as Stennis was announced. With a little cry of astonishment she straightened up at the sight of him, and after a slight hand-clasp stood idly by while Wilf—once more, it seemed, the kindly, simple Wilf of old—sat down by the side of the sick man and strove to cheer him up.

But something told Eunice it was not for this or for a merely friendly call that he had come.

"Eunice," he said at length, rising and standing before her, "I have brought you some wonderful news. There has been a dreadful mistake, and for these three years past I have been occupying the place that is rightfully yours."

The girl stared at him with affrighted, wide-open eyes.

"Don't be alarmed," said Wilfrid reassuringly. "It's nothing to be afraid of. I only learned the truth an hour ago, and I wanted to be the first to tell you. It seems that you are the daughter of my Uncle Andrew,—we are first cousins, you see,—whom he believed to be dead, and all his money belongs by right to you. It is what he would have wished—if he had known that he had a daughter he would never have thought of me, you know. . . . So from this moment I retire in your favor. The lawyers will tell you all about it, and I shall instruct them to turn everything over to you. I believe that's all I came to say, Eunice. Good-by."

He took her hand in farewell, which she yielded to him mechanically, and before she could detain him by look or a word he was gone. She took one step in his direction, her arms outstretched in a

gesture of great yearning, uttered one heart-cry, "Wilf!" and then fell to the floor in a dead faint—something she never did in her life before, nor has since.

Then followed for a few days a perfect whirl of excitement, for Mr. Carboy appeared upon the scene and verified in detail all that Wilfrid had sketched in outline. And when it came to considering the narrative dovetailed together so astutely by Roger Hews, old John Trevecca was able to add many little corroborative details which had lain dormant in his memory for years.

So Eunice Trevecca found herself in all probability the richest single woman in America. Her first thought was to give her stepfather the best of care and attendance, under which his health-speedily mended, being of a constitution naturally hale and hearty.

At first Eunice insisted that Wilfrid should share and share alike. Finding this impracticable, she offered to settle a certain definite sum upon him. But not a dollar would he accept, saying that if she would forgive him the large sums he had disbursed during his false tenure he would be content.

All these attempted negotiations were conducted by the lawyers; not once did the cousins meet, not a line passed between them.

"I treated her too shabbily when I was well off," said Wilfrid to himself; "I can't and won't go hanging and whining about for a chance bone now that our positions are reversed."

On her part Eunice was hurt and offended that her generous and kindly meant offers had been so steadily rejected.

"It looks as if he wanted to put me in the wrong," she reflected, yet a second thought told her that such was not Wilfrid's way.

XI.

THE summer swooped down on New York in the latter days of June with a rush, as is its wont. The walls of the new house on Riverside Drive were up to the heavy cornices, and the roof was closed in, for Eunice had given orders that the work was not to be stopped nor the original plans one whit altered.

Nearly every afternoon she and old John would drive up there after the heat of the day, for, having made the seductive acquaintance of the Claremont, the old man developed a perfect mania for dining on its covered piazza, and so there was usually reserved for the young beauty and her rough and rugged escort his favorite corner-seat, whence they could see the noble river losing itself in the haze northward.

On one of these trips, as they drove slowly past the new mansion, Eunice was sure she saw Wilfrid walking away with hasty strides, his back towards them.

"Poor fellow!" she sighed. "How he must miss it all! What a dreadful change for him to go back to the life he always hated so!"

For by dint of careful inquiries she had found out that Stennis had applied to his old firm, and was again doing desk drudgery from nine to five at eighteen dollars a week.

Perhaps—for who may fathom the heart of a maid?—it was the knowledge of this that kept her in town all that summer. She often talked of going away somewhere, discussing the merits of several places of which she heard,—the Berkshires, the Hamptons, and even Newport,—but John Trevecca seemed very hard to move just then.

"Bide a bit, lassie," he would say. "There's a mort o' time ahead o' 'ee. Who'll see ta th' iron-work 'round th' new hoose if I'm awa'?"

Eunice laughed good-humoredly. "Oh, well," she agreed, "if you are quite comfortable I am content to stay in town, dear. There is plenty of leisure before us, as you say. We must go somewhere this winter, though, or I shall be having you on my hands again with that dreadful asthma. What do you say to going to Bermuda to escape the damp and the cold?"

"Any place so's there's plenty o' warm sunshine," he would answer, and she let him off for the present with that understanding.

So the torrid months of July and August slipped by, and September came in with the Dog Star dying hard. Despite the heat, they really were very comfortable in their new abode high up in one of the great apartment-hotels overlooking the Park. Eunice had never appeared lovelier. All her good points were enhanced by the pretty toilets in which she felt she could now indulge, and with feminine quickness she soon adapted herself and her personal adornments to her new circumstances. Of one thing she was secretly very glad: Wilfrid's beautiful ring, which had been often out of place in the latitude of Macdougall Street, now never left her finger—a trifling fact which did not escape the keen scrutiny of old John Trevecca. But never a word said he.

One evening, after a scorching hot day, when all the city to the southward lay shrouded in a steaming haze of heat, Eunice and her father, having just finished dinner, were sitting at the open window in the fast-deepening twilight, the old man puffing at a great meerschau pipe which had been one of Wilf's earliest gifts in his opulent days.

"A gentleman to see Mr. Trevecca," announced the voice of a maidservant out of the dusk of the inner room.

"Who do you suppose it can be?" said Eunice, switching on the lights. "Did the gentleman give any name?" she inquired.

"No, Ma'am; he said he wanted to see Mr. Trevecca personally," was the reply.

Old John rose heavily out of his spacious chair and went shuffling into the reception-room, closing the door behind him. A young man rose upon his entrance, saying:

"My name's Matthews, Mr. Trevecca. I've looked you up because there's a friend of mine who I fancy is a friend of yours also, and who needs some attention—Wilfrid Stennis."

"Eh, lad, 'ee doan't say so!" rumbled the old fellow. "An' what do 'ee say's th' matter wi' th' lad?"

"Well, sir, as far as I can make out he's all gone to pieces,—pegged out,—down on his luck, y' know," was the jerky answer.

Old Trevecca nodded and smoked furiously, as was his wont when inwardly excited.

"He rooms across the hall from me—same room's he had before he came into all that money. Been working pretty hard all summer,—no vacation, y' know,—and I guess he's about tuckered out. Little off his head when I got home to-night. Kept mumbling a lot of rubbish, but I caught on to your name. Remembered he used to know you, and so I came up here. Beastly boarding-house,—people don't care,—no place for a sick man, y' know. Ought to have a doctor or a nurse, I guess!"

During this speech old John was a study. His huge bulk heaved and swelled, his eyes flashed fire from under their bushy thatches, and he fairly belched smoke.

"Eh, lad!" he rumbled, gripping the hand of young Stanley Matthews and nearly dragging him off his feet, "y' coom ta th' reet shop, y' did! Ah've got summun in there as'll be both doctor and nuss to poor Wilf. Be y' goin' reet back? Yes? Then we'll be wi' y' in th' twinklin' o' a bedpost! Bide ye there!"

He fairly trotted into the room where he had left Eunice.

"Pit an y' things, lassie!" he cried, struggling out of his detested fashionable lounging-jacket and into a street-coat, and jamming the soft felt wide-awake, to which he still clung, on his grizzled head, "I want 'ee ta coom wi' me this minute!"

Eunice's maid at a signal fetched her hat and gloves, and in five minutes they were out on Columbus Avenue and boarding a passing car. The introduction to Matthews was accomplished in this wise,—

"This is th' nuss an' th' doctor I was tellin' 'ee of, Mr. Matthews—my daughter, Miss Trevecca," accompanied by a mighty jab of the elbow that nearly knocked the breath out of the astonished Stanley.

They alighted at the corner of Waverley Place and Broadway and walked through to Washington Square. It was many weeks since Eunice had been in the neighborhood, and she looked curiously at the once familiar scenes, and sniffed the heavy and fetid air with something of disgust.

Matthews led the way up the stoop of one of the old-fashioned houses on the south side of the square, which was filled with boarders of both sexes taking the air, who looked wonderingly at the daintily dressed Eunice as they made way for the trio.

"If you'll wait here," said Stanley, showing them into the boarding-house parlor, "I'll just run up and see if he's fit to receive company."

"I'll go wi' 'ee, lad," said Trevecca. "Bide here a bit, girlie."

Left alone, her heart in a tremor, for all she had been able to elicit from her father on the way down was the admission that Wilfrid was ill and needed looking after, the girl was a prey to emotions which there was no time to analyze, for in a very few minutes old John appeared at the door again and beckoned her silently. He led the way up the wide, uncarpeted stairs, pausing a moment outside the room to say, in a rumbling whisper,—

"He's in there, lassie, an' he needs 'ee badly." Then he opened the door and gently pushed her in. As he looked back for one instant he saw Eunice on her knees by the bedside, with Wilfrid's head in her arms. Then he closed the door gently and waited, confident of the result.

"They've both been tried in th' crucible, but th' fire hasna hurted them!" he muttered in his native brogue.

XII.

UPON the sheltered deck of a south-bound steamer a month later stood two figures, Wilfrid Stennis and Eunice, his wife. They had been married that morning. John Trevecca was also on board, but in the smoking-room, out of the night air.

The Highland Lights on Navesink were flashing like twin-stars against a pale streak of clear autumn sunset which threw into relief the rounded hills of Staten Island.

His arm was around her waist, and her head was pillowed on his shoulder, careless of any chance beholders. Two sentences are all we need to overhear of their murmured conversation:

"Eunice means 'happy victory,' you know," the girl was saying. "It has certainly proved so for us. Don't you think so, Wilf?"

He pressed her closer to him for answer, and then with his free hand he pointed to the dying day, saying,—

"At evening time it shall be light!"



THE TOURIST

By Agnes Repplier

Author of "The Fireside Sphinx," etc.



"POTTER hates Potter, and Poet hates Poet,"—so runs the wisdom of the ancients,—but tourist hates tourist with a cordial Christian animosity that casts all Pagan prejudices in the shade. At home we tolerate,—sometimes we even love,—our fellow-creatures. We can see large masses of them in church and theatre, we can be jostled by them in streets, and be kept waiting by them in shops, and be inconvenienced by them at almost every turn, without rancorous annoyance or ill-will. But abroad it is our habit to regard all other travellers in the light of personal and unpardonable grievances. They are intruders into our chosen realms of pleasure, they jar upon our sensibilities, they lessen our meagre share of comforts, they are everywhere in our way, they are always an unnecessary feature in the landscape.

"I love not man the less, but nature more."

wrote Byron, when sore beset; but the remark cannot be said to bear the signs of truth. Nine-tenths of the poet's love for nature was irritation at the boundless injustice and the sterling stupidity of man. He would never have expressed so much general benevolence had Europe in his time been the tourist-trodden platform it is to-day.

We might, were we disposed to be reasonable, bear in mind the humiliating fact that we too are aliens, out of harmony with our surroundings, and marring, as far as in us lies, the charm of ancient street, or the still mountain-side. Few of us, however, are so candid as Mr. Henry James, who, while detesting his fellow-travellers, frankly admits his own inherent undesirability. "We complain," he says, "of a hackneyed and cockneyized Europe; but wherever, in desperate search of the untrodden, we carry our much-labelled luggage, our bad French, our demand for a sitz-bath and pale ale, we rub off the pale bloom of local color, and establish a precedent for unlimited intrusion."

This is generous, and it is not a common point of view. "Americans do roam so," I heard an Englishwoman remark discontentedly in

Cook's Paris office, where she was waiting with manifest impatience while the clerk made up tickets for a party of trans-Atlantic kindred. It never seemed to occur to her that she was not upon her own native heath. The habit of classifying our distastes proves how strong is our general sense of injury. We dislike English tourists more than French, or French more than English, or Americans more than either, or Germans most of all,—the last a common verdict. There is a power of universal mastery about the travelling Teuton that affronts our feebler souls. We cannot cope with him; we stand defeated at every turn by his resistless determination to secure the best. The windows of the railway carriages, the little, sunny tables in the hotel dining-rooms, the back seats—commanding the view—of the Swiss funiculaires;—all these strong positions he occupies at once with the strategical genius of a great military nation. No weak concern for other people's comfort mars the simple straightforwardness of his plans, nor interferes with their prompt and masterly execution. Amid the confusion and misery of French and Italian railway stations he stands a conqueror, commanding the services of the porters, and marching off triumphantly with his innumerable pieces of hand luggage, while his fellow-tourists clamor helplessly for aid. "The Germans are a rude, unmannered race, but active and expert where their personal advantages are concerned," wrote the observant Froissart many years ago. He could say no more nor less were he travelling over the Continent to-day.

Granted that the scurrying crowds who infest Italy every spring, and Switzerland every summer, are seldom "children of light;" that their motives in coming are, for the most part, unintelligible, and their behavior the reverse of urbane;—even then there seems to be no real reason for the demoralization that follows in their wake, for the sudden and bitter change that comes over a land when once the stranger claims it as his own. It is the cordial effort made to meet the tourist half-way, to minister to his supposed wants, and to profit by his supposed wealth, that desolates the loveliest cities in the world, that flouts the face of nature and hurts our most tender sensibilities. Venice turned into a grand bazaar, Vaucluse packed with stalls for the sale of every object which ought never to be found there, the Falls of the Rhine lit up by electricity, like the transformation scene of a ballet;—is it our misfortune or our fault that these things may be directly traceable to us? Do we *like* to see a trolley-car bumping its way to Chillon, or to find the castle entrance stocked with silver spoons, and wooden bears, and miniature Swiss chalets? Shall I confess that I watched a youthful countrywoman of my own carrying delightedly away—as an appropriate souvenir of the spot—a group consisting of mother bear sitting up languidly in bed, nurse bear wrapping infant

bear in swaddling-cloths, and doctor bear holding a labelled bottle of medicine! There seemed a certain incongruity about the purchase, and a certain lack of sensibility in the purchaser. Chillon is not without sombre associations, nor poetic life, and if Byron's *Prisoner* no longer wrings our hearts, still youth is youth,—or, at least, it used to be,—and the

“—seven columns, massy and gray,”

were at one time part of its inheritance. Is it better, I wonder, to begin life with a few illusions, a little glow, a pardonable capacity for enthusiasm, or to be so healthily free from every breath of sentiment as to be capable—at eighteen—of buying comic bears within the melancholy portals of Chillon.

Travelling, like novel-writing, is but a modern form of activity; and tourists, like novelists, are increasing at so fearful a rate of speed that foreign countries and library shelves bid fair to be equally overrun. There *was* a time when good men looked askance both upon the page of fable, and upon those far countries where reality was stranger than romance. “I was once in Italy myself,” confesses the pious Roger Ascham; “but I thank God my abode there was but nine days.” Nine days seem a scant allowance for Italy. Even the business-like traveller who now scampers “more Americano” over Europe is wont to deal more generously with this, its fairest land. But in Roger Ascham's time nine days would hardly have permitted a glimpse at the wonders from which he so swiftly and fearfully withdrew.

Now and then, as years went by, men with a genuine love of roving and adventure wandered far afield, un baffled by difficulties and unscandalized by foreign creeds and customs. James Howell, that most delightful of gossips and chroniclers, has so much to say in praise of “the sweetness and advantage of travel” that even now his letters—nearly three hundred years old—stir in our hearts the wayfarer's restless longing. After being “toss'd from shore to shore for thirty-odd months,” he can still write stoutly: “And tho' these frequent removes and tumblings under climes of differing temper were not without some danger, yet the delight which accompany'd them was far greater; and it is impossible for any man to conceive the true pleasure of peregrination, but he who actually enjoys and puts it into practice.” Moreover, he is well assured that travel is “a profitable school, a running academy, and nothing conduceth more to the building up and perfecting of a man. They that traverse the world up and down have the clearest understanding; being faithful eye-witnesses of those things which others receive but in trust, whereunto they must yield an intuitive consent, and a kind of implicit faith.”

In one respect, however, Howell was a true son of his day, of the

day when Prelacy and Puritanism alternately afflicted England. For foreign cities and foreign citizens he had a keen and intelligent appreciation; nothing daunted his purpose nor escaped his observation; but he drew the line consistently at the charms of nature. The "high and hideous Alps" were as abhorrent to his soul as they were, a century later, to Horace Walpole. It was the gradual—I had almost said the regrettable—discovery of beauty in these "uncouth, huge, monstrous excrescences" which gave a new and powerful impetus to travel. Here at least were innocent objects of pilgrimage, wonders uncontaminated by the evils which were vaguely supposed to lurk in the hearts of Paris and of Rome. It was many, many years after Roger Ascham's praiseworthy flight from Italy that we find Patty More, sister to the ever-virtuous Hannah, writing apprehensively to a friend:

"What is to become of us? All the world, as it seems, flying off to France, that land of deep corruption and wickedness, made hotter in sin by this long and dreadful Revolution. *The very curates in our neighborhood have been.* . . . I fear a deterioration in the English character is taking place. The Ambassador's lady in Paris could not introduce the English ladies till they had covered up their bodies."

This sounds rather as though England were corrupting France. Perhaps, notwithstanding the truly reprehensible conduct of the curates,—for whom no excuse can be made,—the exodus was not so universal as the agitated Mrs. Patty seemed to think. There were still plenty of stay-at-homes, lapped in rural virtues, and safe from contamination;—like the squire who told Jane Austen's father that he and his wife had been quarrelling the night before as to whether Paris were in France, or France in Paris. The "Roman Priest Conversion Branch Tract Society" gave to bucolic Britain all the Continental details it required.

But when the "hideous Alps" became the "matchless heights," the "palaces of Nature," when poets had sung their praises lustily, and it had dawned upon the minds of unpoetic men that they were not merely obstacles to be crossed, but objects to be looked at and admired;—*then* were gathered slowly the advance guard of that mighty army of sight-seers which sweeps over Europe to-day. "Switzerland," writes Mr. James gloomily, "has become a show country. I think so more and more every time I come here. Its use in the world is to reassure persons of a benevolent imagination who wish the majority of mankind had only a little more elevating amusement. Here is amusement for a thousand years, and as elevating certainly as mountains five miles high can make it. I expect to live to see the summit of Mount Rosa heated by steam-tubes, and adorned with a hotel setting three dinners a day."

The last words carry a world of weight. They are the key-note of

the situation. Tourists in these years of grace need a vast deal of food and drink to keep their enthusiasm warm. James Howell lived contentedly upon bread and grapes for three long months in Spain. Byron wrote mockingly from Lisbon: "Comfort must not be expected by folks that go a-pleasuring;" and no one ever bore manifold discomforts with more endurance and gayety than did he. But now that the "grand tour"—once the experience of a lifetime—has become a succession of little tours undertaken every year or two, things are made easy for slackened sinews and impaired digestions. The average traveller concentrates his attention sternly upon the slowness of the Italian trains, the shortness of the Swiss beds, the surliness of the German officials, the dirt of the French inns, the debatableness of the Spanish butter, the universal and world-embracing badness of the tea. These things form the staple topics of discussion among men and women who exchange confidences at the table d'hôte, and they lend a somewhat depressing tone to the conversation, which is not greatly enlivened by a few side remarks connecting the drinking water with the germs of typhoid fever. It is possible that the talkers have enjoyed some exhilarating experiences, some agreeable sensations, which they hesitate—mistakenly—to reveal; but they wax eloquent on the subject of cost. "The continual attention to pecuniary disbursements detracts terribly from the pleasure of all travelling schemes," wrote Shelley in a moment of dejection; and the sentiment, couched in less Johnsonian English, is monotonously familiar to-day. Paying for things is a great trouble and a great expense; and the tourist's uneasy apprehension that he is being overcharged turns this ordinary process—which is not wholly unknown at home—into a bitter grievance. To hear him expatiate upon the subject, one would imagine that his fellow-creatures had heretofore supplied all his wants for love.

Great Britain sent her restless children out to see the world for many years before far-away America joined in the sport, while the overwhelming increase of German travellers dates only from the Franco-Prussian War. Now the three armies of occupation march and countermarch over the Continent, very much in one another's way, and deeply resentful of one another's intrusion. "The English"—again I venture to quote Froissart—"are affable to no other nation than their own." The Americans—so other Americans piteously lament—are noisy, self-assertive, and contemptuous. The fault of the Germans, as Canning said of the Dutch,—

"Is giving too little and asking too much."

All these unlovely characteristics are stimulated and kept well to the fore by travel. It is only in our fellow-tourists that we can recognize

their enormity. When Mr. Arnold said that Shakespeare and Virgil would have found the Pilgrim Fathers "intolerable company," he was probably thinking of poets and pietists shut up together in fair weather and in foul, while the little Mayflower pitched its slow way across the "estranging sea."

It requires a good deal of courage to quote Lord Chesterfield seriously in these years of grace. His reasonableness is out of favor with moralists, and sentimentalists, and earnest thinkers generally. But we might find it helpful now and then, were we not too wrapped in self-esteem to be so easily helped. "Good breeding," he says thoughtfully, "is a combination of much sense, some good-nature, and a little self-denial for the sake of others, with a view to obtain the same indulgence from them." Here is a "Tourist's Guide"—the briefest ever penned. We cannot learn to love other tourists,—the laws of nature are not so lightly set aside,—but, meditating soberly on the impossibility of their loving us, we may reach some common platform of tolerance, some common exchange of recognition and amenity.



ST. PETER'S

BY EDITH M. THOMAS

HERE dwells the splendor of meridian day;
 No mourning violet, no impassioned rose,
 Its tint on marble shaft or pavement throws;
 But here the joy antique abides alway.
 I did not see the Roman victors lay
 On Jove's high altar tribute reft from foes,
 I did not see the Roman maids enclose
 The white Diana, and their garlands pay:
 But subtle sense, past sight, for me sufficed,
 And this I say, "Thou comest all in vain,
 Meek pilgrim—stern iconoclast—for lo!
 This place knows neither Christ nor Antichrist;
 This builded marble mount is but the fane
 Of those who held Olympus long ago!"

THE RETURN

By Beulah Marie Dix

Author of "The Making of Christopher Ferringham"



IN the old-fashioned parlor of an old-fashioned house four women sat talking, while a little child played near them. The windows of the parlor looked to the west, and the light of the sinking sun, filtering through the green leaves of the tall lilac-bushes without, fell graciously upon the flowery Brussels carpet, the stiff black-walnut furniture, and the tall Parian vases, filled with plummy pampas grass, that stood upon the mantelpiece. Scent and sound came also through the open windows. The heavy perfume of the lilacs was wafted into the parlor, and from time to time the voices of children, at play in the dusty village street, were shrilly audible.

"Yes, Asher's letter came this morning," said Lora Marlowe, the youngest of the four women. She was sitting on a low hassock, with her crinoline billowing round her. She wore a dress of silver-gray poplin and a knitted collar, fastened at her throat with a cameo brooch. There were reddish-brown tints in her smooth hair, where the sunlight touched it, and there were dimples in her cheeks. She seemed a young girl, but the dignity and tenderness of motherhood were in her eyes when she looked upon the child beside her. "Baby and I went up to the post-office. We go every morning, you know, in case father should write to us. And there was the letter! When I opened it, I couldn't believe my eyes at first. So I ran home to Mother Marlowe——"

"She came running in like a crazy creature," old Mrs. Marlowe took up the story. "'Mercy!' thought I, 'Baby must have swallowed something.' So I cried 'Baby!' and Lora cried 'Asher!' and Baby tried her best to tell us all about it, and there was Bedlam let loose for a minute. Then Lora gave me the letter, and we found it was all true. Asher is to have a furlough at last." Asher was Mrs. Marlowe's only son, Lora's husband, and he was a captain in the Army of the Potomac.

"Well, I should think 'twas time he had a furlough!" snapped Aunt Selina Hill, a fat old woman with a deceptive appearance of good-nature. "How long has he been gone now? Twenty months, is it? I call it a downright shame! You needn't shake your head at me, Caddy!"—this to Mrs. Hill, Lora's meek little mother,—“I shall say my say. When a young man's married, and there's a baby coming, I think he'd better stay home and let other people save the country."

Having said her say, Aunt Selina glared stonily. She would not "knuckle down" to Mrs. Marlowe, even though she was Mrs. Marlowe's guest. In her heart she despised all Marlowes. What though they had once been the great folk of the little village? Could she not buy and sell them all with the spoils of her husband, the successful trader? She had bitterly opposed Lora's marriage to young Asher Marlowe, and had only been half-reconciled to her niece when the baby was named after her.

Little Mrs. Hill glanced apprehensively from Aunt Selina to Mrs. Marlowe, and Lora set her lips. It was Mrs. Marlowe herself who answered, erect in her black-walnut chair, with her hands gripping the arms tensely, and the ascetic lines of her fine New England face at their sternest. "A country that's worth saving is worth making sacrifices for," she said. "When the President called for volunteers, Asher was ready to go."

Lora raised her eyes. "And I was ready to let him go!" she said. The dimples had gone from her cheeks, and her face wore again the look of wistful patience that it had worn through the last twenty months. Oh, it had been hard, harder than these women could dream! They could not know of the long nights when she had lain sobbing in her lonely bed, of the days of hourly fear, when the horrors of battle and defeat, of prison and slow death, were in every man's speech. The ordeal was ended, but, like one tortured till very excess of pain deadens the senses, in the reaction of relief Lora felt to the full the martyrdom that she had undergone.

She turned her gaze away from Aunt Selina's stolid stare and her mother's curious eyes, and for comfort looked down at the baby. Little Selina was in her seventeenth month, a tiny, dark-haired child, with blue eyes like her father. The anxiety and fear in which her mother had borne her had given the child a heritage of nervous gestures, of elvish wise glances, of a precocity in all things far beyond her age. She looked up now with a seeming comprehension in her glance that brought the tears to Lora's eyes. "Think of it!" she said softly; "Asher's never seen his baby."

"Well, I'm sure," purred Mrs. Hill consolingly, "you've sent him her daguerreotype, and you've written him everything."

Lora made an impatient gesture. "Oh, what's a picture or a hundred letters to having *her*!" she cried, and little Selina, by way of approbation, babbled vigorously, "Ah da! Da, da!"

"You see, she thinks so too," said Lora gravely.

Even Aunt Selina unbent. She adored the baby, and had spoken vaguely of leaving her "property." "I guess Asher Marlowe'll be proud of her," she exclaimed.

"You'd think so if you could see his letter," Lora replied. She

did not speak more specifically. It would have been sacrilege to let Aunt Selina have the glimpse into Asher's heart that the letter of that morning had given. Taciturn, self-contained, like a true New-Englander, the soldier had gone his way, with no word of repining, no hint of longing for home that, to his mind, would add to the unhappiness of those he had left behind him. In the fear of cheating them with false hope he had even kept silent touching the matter of the furlough till it was absolutely granted to him. But now that he was sure, in twelve days' time, of seeing again his home and his people, the heart of the man had poured itself out. Even Lora had not suspected the ardor of the fire under that cold-seeming exterior. The letter had been one passionate cry of longing. He thought of her, day and night, and of their child. He carried the baby's daguerreotype next his heart. He pictured her to himself when he sat at night by his campfire, till he almost thought to see her laughing upon him with elvish eyes as her mother had described her. He was counting the days till he should see his wife and child, counting the very hours. At times he almost doubted that such happiness could be in store for him, and grew fearful at the thought. It was all too good to be true. Lora smiled to remember that phrase. Not for a moment did she doubt. She had suffered, and now the reward of her suffering, her husband's return, was the due that surely would not be denied her.

From her thought of Asher, Lora roused herself to listless interest in what went on around her. Aunt Selina and Mrs. Hill were now deep in their usual comedy of rivalry. After all, Asher's return, save in so far as it gave Lora pleasure, was of small concern to them. The baby was far more important than the baby's father. Indeed, Aunt Selina was more than half inclined to look upon him merely as an unwelcome claimant to a share in the baby's affections. From her reticule she had drawn her weekly offering for Selina, a round white peppermint, and Mrs. Hill, not to be outdone, had brought out a large glass alley with a spiral of red and yellow twinkling at its core. "See what Gammy Hill has brought you, dear," she urged, while Aunt Selina, bending forward in her rustling green silk, cooed, "Doesn't Selina want some nice can-can?"

Selina cocked her head wisely, then trotted across the parlor, stepping sturdily over the huge roses which adorned the Brussels carpet, and held out her hand for the peppermint.

"Her auntie knows what she wants!" cried Aunt Selina. She smiled triumphantly upon the two grandmothers, but her triumph was short-lived. With the coveted peppermint clutched in one hand, Selina backed away to Mrs. Hill, and held out the other hand for the desirable alley. "Did you ever see such a schemer!" cried the delighted grandmother, and then her delight, in its turn, came to a

sudden end, for Selina pattered deliberately across the floor and laid her treasures on old Mrs. Marlowe's knee. "Ah da, da!" she explained eagerly.

This was a going over to the enemy, and Aunt Selina resented it after her kind. "Well, I don't wonder, Lora, that you're glad to have Asher back after all these months," she took up the conversation abruptly. "And you're happy to get him back, happier'n a good many poor girls. War's a dreadful thing!"

"Don't I know that?" flashed Lora.

Aunt Selina was silent, but Mrs. Hill, in all innocence, took up her words. "Yes, Lora, it's a Christian duty to count your mercies. Your brother El was down to the Cranes' last night. They'd just got word that Jimmy Crane was dead. He was wounded at Chancellorsville, but he was doing nicely. They'd planned to bring him home next week."

"Yes,"—Aunt Selina sighed heavily,—“but all of a sudden a gangrene set in, and he died in the hospital.”

"Tisn't in battle alone that men get their death," old Mrs. Marlowe interrupted sternly. "If you're set to talk of dead men, Mr. Batcheller had a stroke the beginning of the month, and Cyrus Drew has just died of typhoid, right here in the village."

"Oh, what are we talking of such things for!" Lora broke out. Her voice was higher than its wont. "Come, I want you to listen to Selina. She picks up new words every day, and I've talked to her about her father till she's learnt to say, 'Father's at the war.' She took it up of herself. Listen to her now. Selina!"

The baby looked up. She had crawled beneath the marble-topped table, where she crouched now on all fours, with the bright alley between her little, outspread hands.

"Selina, where's father?"

Selina gave a gurgle of laughter. "Favver"—she said, and paused—"favver—dead."

Lora caught a sharp breath. "Oh, *no*, dear! Father's at the war. Say it, dear, say it!"

Selina chuckled again, and, setting the alley to roll, hitched herself leisurely after it.

Aunt Selina was first to find tongue. "The little poll-parrot!" she cried. "How quick she caught up our words!"

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Hill, "she heard us saying 'dead.' She's bright as a button."

"You have to be careful what you say before her," Mrs. Marlowe added, and her face lightened. Only Lora sat silent, with brooding eyes upon the child.

Out in the sitting-room the clock struck five. "We must be going,"

Mrs. Hill said, and rose. "I want to beat up some biscuit for supper. I've a lot of sour milk. Do you want some, Lora? I'll send El up with it to-morrow."

With household gossip the visitors made their way out at the front door and across the little strip of swarded yard. By this time the sun had dropped low towards the distant hilltops, where the pine-trees bristled, and on the dusty street the shadows lay in long tracings. Lora's gaze followed the two women a moment as they started down the dappled street. She noted the monstrous shadow that kept pace with Aunt Selina. Then her gaze travelled beyond them, under the arching elms, past the trim houses, in their irregular neat gardens, till it rested on the open space of the wide Training Green. It was there that Asher Marlowe's company had been drawn up on the blue September day when they started to the front. Even now Lora thought to hear the rat-tat of the drumsticks and the fifes shrilling, "The Girl I Left Behind Me," the devil-may-care little tune with the sob at the heart of it. Oh, the shrilling of the fifes! How they had cried in her ears through the long months! Once more the Training Green was blurred and misty to her eyes, but now the tears were for pure joy. Twelve days, only twelve days, and he would come to her again, across the Green and up the shadowed village street, her Captain, the father of her child.

It was of Asher that Lora and Mrs. Marlowe talked that evening while they prepared their simple supper and while they sat at table. The mother's thoughts were in the past; she told stories of her boy's childhood—the pranks he had played, the little triumphs he had won, the kind heart he had had for children, and—here her voice faltered—the loving respect he had always shown his mother. But the wife's thoughts were in the future—how she would tell Asher this and show him that; how it would be honeymoon over again, with the blessed difference of little Selina's presence, when at last her soldier came home. The voices of the women were eager, so eager that Selina stopped feeding herself with her spoon, which she held awkwardly by the very tip of the handle, and added her word. "Favver! Favver!" she cried, and beat the spoon joyously upon the table.

"You midget!" said Lora, and bent to kiss the child. "What will father say to a little girl that spills milk on her clean bib? Come, it's somebody's bedtime that I know."

She lifted the child in her arms and went slowly up the stairs, through the dusky rooms, to the great front chamber. It had been her bridal chamber. She glanced round it with loving eyes. No, Asher would find nothing changed—nothing except for the crib that stood by the great, black-walnut bedstead. She sat down in the low rocking-chair by the window, where the light was brightest, and undressed

Selina, then, folding her in a little shawl, rocked her softly in her arms. Through the window she could see the pines of the distant hilltops, black and jagged against the red afterglow of sunset, and in the soft dusk she could hear the peeping of the frogs. Instinctively her lullaby fell to a minor key.

The child in Lora's arms stirred and murmured. She was unusually restless this night. It was quite dark in the chamber, and in the west the first golden star shone in the paling afterglow before she lay quiet. Lora looked down at the dark head upon her breast. Would this woman-child ever know sorrow such as hers had been—and would she ever know such joy as was to be hers? Kissing Selina very gently, she laid her softly in the crib and then stole down the stairs.

In the lighted sitting-room Mrs. Marlowe looked up from her crocheting. "You were longer than usual," she said. "Nothing's wrong with Baby, is there?"

"She was excited," Lora answered. "I had hard work to get her to sleep."

She took some sewing and seated herself at the table, opposite her mother-in-law. For a time they chatted as they worked, then a silence fell, and in the silence a little sound in the upper chamber reached their ears.

"Hark!" the older woman exclaimed, and turned a listening face to the open door. "Don't I hear Baby crying?"

Lora stepped to the door. "Why, no! She's laughing. The little witch! She may creep out of bed." Once more she went swiftly up the stairs. She did not mean to speak, for the child, left alone, might fall asleep again, but she paused in the doorway and looked into the chamber. She could see the outlines of the crib and the form of the child, lying on her back amid the coverlets. That was all she could see, but she heard Selina cooing to herself. "What is it, dear?" she asked.

Instantly Selina gave a wail. Lora ran to the crib and bent over her. "What is it? Mother's precious! Did she dream? Was she frightened? There, there, tell mother!"

Selina was sobbing now, with a sharp intake of the breath. "Man!" she repeated—"Man!" and pointed to the foot of the crib. Lora's eyes followed the direction of the little hand. "Why, no, sweetheart. There's nothing there—only the shadows and the dark. Don't cry, pet. Was it a horrid dream?"

But Selina still whimpered. "Man!" she said. "G'eat—big—man!" and clung to her mother.

Lora bent closer over the child. "This is nonsense!" she said, half aloud. "No one is here—no one could be here! I will not be foolish." She lifted Selina in her arms and, walking resolutely through the dark to the rocking-chair, soothed the child to sleep again. It was a

long task. Once the cane in a chair-seat snapped with a sound that was loud in the quiet chamber, and Lora started so violently that she roused the child. But at last Selina slept again, and, having tucked her into the crib, Lora descended the stairs without hurry, though to keep the slow pace cost her an effort of will.

"You look tired to death," said Mrs. Marlowe at the first sight of her.

Lora glanced about her—at the worn stuffed chairs, and the big, hollow-seated sofa, the wooden clock on the mantelpiece, and the knitted lamp-mat on the table—all the little familiar home-objects the sight of which made her fears of the dark chamber seem childish and unreal.

"We must turn over a new leaf," she said as she sat down on the sofa. "Selina's just dreamt that a man stood by the crib and looked down at her. She's all wrought up. She understands more of our talk than we think. We must stop talking of Asher before her."

All the next day Lora and Mrs. Marlowe were very careful. No word of father and his home-coming was uttered in Selina's presence. They hid their joy, as if it were a thing to do her harm—at least, they tried to hide it, but again and again, in a word or a glance, a little jest or the humming of a broken tune, they let it peep out. "Do you think 'twould be extravagant if I bought me a purple delaine?" Lora broke out once as they sat at their sewing. "I had one when—when Asher was courting me, and he liked it best of any dress I ever had. I could make it up before he comes." And again, at supper-time, Mrs. Marlowe said, "We'll have a lemon pie, made with molasses, the night Asher comes home. He used to relish my lemon pies." But there was nothing in these sober plans to distract Selina. She went softly to sleep this night, and Lora kissed her and laid her down while the afterglow still was bright in the sky. "It is only eleven days now," she told herself, and went down the stairs to join her husband's mother.

It was so early in the evening that Mrs. Marlowe had not lit the lamp. Lora found her sitting on the front doorstep in the soft twilight. The scent of the lilacs was heavy on the evening air, and the frogs were peeping.

"I don't like to hear the frogs," said Mrs. Marlowe, "they sound mournful."

Lora shook her head. "I like them," she answered. "It is a perfect night." She went down the step to the lilac-bushes that stood by the front windows and began breaking off great clusters. "The vases in the sitting-room are empty," she said. "We must make the most of the lilacs. They'll be gone by the time Asher comes. I'm sorry for that." She was silent then. The gate had clicked open on her speech.

"Why, 'tis your brother El," said Mrs. Marlowe. "Yes, and your mother, Lora."

Lora turned and let the lilacs drop from her hands, for her mother was crying. Lora could not see her face, but she heard her stifling her sobs. "What is it, El?" she asked, and her voice sounded to her thin and distant. "What is it?"

The young man hesitated. In that moment's silence the peeping of the frogs came through the dusk, very shrill and insistent. "I've news for you, Lora," he began slowly. "Mother was to tell you. The telegram has just come. There was fighting yesterday—no more than a skirmish, but there was firing, and—and——"

"It was yesterday, late in the afternoon," Lora repeated. "And Asher is dead."

Mrs. Hill broke into loud weeping. "You poor child! You poor child!" she sobbed. But old Mrs. Marlowe sank back against the door-frame, and her hands, so firm and tense the day before, fluttered nervously, aimlessly, upon her lap. "We might have known," she whispered huskily. "Oh Lora, we might have known! Last night—his little girl he'd never seen—he came to her—he came back to see his baby."

"Oh," wailed Mrs. Hill, "you must be crazy to say such things!—you, a Christian woman!"

There she stopped, for Lora had stepped slowly forward. She held her hand before her like one struck blind. "No!" she said, when her brother would have helped her, and, gliding through their midst, passed slowly into the house and up the stairway.

Within the room that had been her bridal chamber, Lora closed the door and an instant stood rigidly against it, her hands to her temples, her eyes searching the darkness. "Asher!" she called softly. "Asher! Come to me! I am here. And I am not afraid now. Oh, come to me, come!"

Still the room was silent and black. With the sob breaking in her throat, Lora ran to the bedside and, kneeling by it, drew her child from the crib into her arms. Selina awoke and cried fretfully. "Oh, hush, hush!" Lora soothed. "Don't cry, my baby! Call father! Call him, darling! Call father!"

But the child still cried, and save for her fretful wailing the room was silent.



VERSELET

BY JOHN DAW

HOW wonderful is the alchemy of the soil!
 For here's a seed and there the crumbled clod,
 And each were barren to eternal toil,
 Saving when mingled in the hand of God.

WAY DOWN IN MAINE

BY FLORENCE A. JONES

WAY down in Maine,
Where skies are blue as skies can be,
Where sunshine falls like golden rain
On green hills sloping towards the sea,

There hides a little, sunny nook,
Thick-starred with spring's first violets;
Far from the city's crowded streets,
The narrow life that jars and frets.

And safe within this sheltered spot
There stands a house, moss-grown and gray,
With little gardens round about,
Where wand'ring breezes stop and play.

O little house among the hills,
I, a lone exile, often dream
I stand once more within your walls,
I roam once more by field and stream.

Again my bare, brown feet have found
The shortest way across the hill
To where ripe nuts fall earliest,
And berries redden by the mill.

Ah me! to know, just as of old,
Where spring first spills her violets,
To find, far from the world of men,
Some little nook where one forgets!

O dreary walls of brick and stone!
O weary life that numbs the brain!
Home-sick, my heart calls out for you,
Dear hills of Maine!

A PRESENTATION TO LEO THE THIRTEENTH

AND OTHER ROMAN NOTES

By Maud Howe



PALAZZO RUSTICUCCI, November 20, 1897.

DIOTIMA, comfortably established in the guest-room under the protection of Apollo, already feels at home in Rome. In the morning she sits on the terrace in a grand hooded chair made in that haunt of basket-makers, the Vicolo dei Canestrari. After luncheon we drive on the Pincio when the band plays, in the Doria or the Borghese Villa the days they are open, or, best of all, on the Campagna. She shall have enough out-of-doors this winter! For a hundred years English doctors have sent elderly people to Rome, "where the effect of the air on the heart's action tends to increase longevity." The old here are uncommonly frisky. An octogenarian who comes to see me trots up our stairs as if he were twenty. On stormy days she drives to St. Peter's and takes her walk inside the church. It is so vast it has a climate of its own, varying only ten degrees in temperature during the entire year, consequently it is warm in winter and cool in summer. Socially as well as climatically this is an ideal place for the old. I have seen a gentleman of seventy-nine waltzing at a ball with a partner not twenty years his junior. The example of the Pope—always an old man—may have something to do with this admirable energy of the elders; the age of the civilization probably counts for more.

Do not believe what the papers say about the Pope; he is likely to live for years. Eighty-seven is the prime of life for Pontiffs. Leo the Thirteenth serves the Italian newspaper men and foreign correspondents as the sea-serpent serves ours. When news is scarce, when the rich and great are veiled from the public eye by reason of summer seclusion or wandering, that blessed serpent, sailing into the sea of ink, saves the situation. The reports of *Sua Santità's* failing health used to rouse my sympathy, now they only make me angry, because they hurt his poor old feelings. He once said, on reading an account of his approaching end in a Roman paper, "Why do they wish me dead?"

Was not that pathetic? In spite of being White in my politics, I feel a personal sympathy for the Pope. We are such near neighbors, I see the windows of his private apartment from the terrace; we both look down upon the Piazza of St. Peter's; we have the same surgeon (Dr. Bull took me to consult Mazzoni about a bicycle ankle); I know several of his chamberlains; we both are left behind when the hot weather drives the *beau monde* out of Rome for the summer: you see, we have much in common; his not knowing it does not alter my feelings; it's one-sided, like a book friendship. I was in Rome when Pius the Ninth died and Leo the Thirteenth was elected. I remember how handsome Pius looked lying in state, with his foot in such a position that his red slipper (it had a cross embroidered on it) could be kissed. I do not remember much about the coronation ceremonies, but I have a very clear impression of my presentation to Pope Leo in the winter of 1878, very soon after he became Pope. Diotima refused to go: those stubborn Protestant knees would not bow down to Baal or to the Pope. My generation takes things differently, not half so picturesquely. We say, "An old man's blessing is a good thing to have, whether he be a lama from Thibet or a priest of Rome." Two other young American girls went with me; there were, all told, perhaps twenty people presented that day. We wore black, with such diamonds as our mothers would lend us, and Spanish mantillas. A few minutes before the Pope entered a chamberlain made us all kneel; then Leo, dressed in white, with a heavy gold chain round his neck from which hung a cross set with emeralds, made the tour of the room, stopping to speak to everyone. The Chamberlain mentioned our names and nationality, the Pope asked each of us to what Church we belonged. My place was next an emotional convert; he hardly noticed her, merely gave his blessing. He asked me where I came from, said Boston was a famous city, inquired how long I had been in Rome, wished me a pleasant journey, and a safe return to my people. He spoke longest to a little Jewess who was at my left—on the principle, I suppose, that we already have our friends, and should make friends of our enemies. We kissed his ring—a large amethyst—as we had been told, *not* his hand. I am not sure whether it was Pope Leo or Pius the Ninth who always asked strangers how long they had been in Rome. When the answer indicated that the stay had been for days or weeks, he said in parting "*Addio*," when it had been months, "*A riverderci*,"—au revoir,—"because if you have been here only a short time, you may not return, but if you have been here for months, you are sure to come back." I have heard it told of both; it very likely dates back to Gregory the Sixteenth. Stories are immortal in Rome, those from the "*Gesta Romanorum*" being still current.

December 27, 1897.

Oh! the terrace, the terrace! with the white hyacinths ablow, little starry bunches of narcissi, pansies, a rare rose, and the yellow gourds of the passion-flower hanging down through the crossed bamboos of the trellis. Diotima feels the fascination of the terrace life more and more. Yesterday she asked me to buy her a small watering-can,—ours are huge,—and to-day she helped water the plants and weeded the tulips. I put the pots up on the wall for her where she could easily reach them, and she pulled out the tender weeds with her beautiful hands. Bulbs do not thrive so well the second year as the first. The delirium of the hyacinths is gone with that precious burst of youth. This season they bloom soberly; no more passionate, lavish giving, they have left that behind,—like some other flowers,—but they do their little, middle-aged best. We had a merry Christmas. The weather was perfect: a gift, the first and best of all, of a clear, bracing morning. "Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous." No emperor being at hand, we went to St. Peter's, walked up and down the side aisles, had just a whiff of the high mass, Cardinal Rampolla officiating, the Pope's angel singing the soprano part phenomenally. His voice has a peculiar soaring quality; it seems to scale the heights of heaven.

We met Boston society, as usual, an old friend and his bride, and a pair of pleasant Beacon Street neighbors.

February 11, 1898.

J. says "Rome is always festering." Between saints' days, national holidays, and our own private celebrations there are rather too many festivities. It is a pretty custom they have here of celebrating the feast of the patron saint rather than the birthday. The embarrassing question, "How old?" is thus avoided. It is also convenient. On the feast of Santa Lucia I am reminded to go and see Lucia di Villegas and carry her a bunch of flowers. I am sure to find Villino Villegas swept and garnished, the Signora dressed in her best, all smiles and sweetness. She has been to mass and is ready to receive friends and relatives. Anglo-Saxons are fond of saying that the home does not exist in Latin lands. This is not quite true. In Italy the home is less a social centre and more a family stronghold than with us. An outsider is only admitted to it as the last test of friendship. It has still a touch of oriental feeling. It is the place where the women belong, where they mostly stay; it is jealously guarded from strangers—from strange men especially; "*chi va piano va sano!*"

Wednesday, the anniversary of our wedding-day, was one long frolic. At nine we went up to our play-house and played with our flower dolls. In the evening we had a little dinner of intimates. Philamena arranged a large horseshoe in double violets and pansies

between J.'s place and mine at table "for good luck." In the morning she brought me a basket of fresh eggs from her people in the country and wished me "*cento di questi giorni*" ("a hundred of these days"). Even Pompilia, the cook, who has been rather cross lately, gave us two paper fans. In the kitchen a *fiascone* of wine and a huge *panetone* were on tap; everybody who passed that way drank our health. After dinner we sat over the fire till past midnight telling stories or listening to J. C. (the Muse of Via Gregoriana), who played divinely to us. It was a good day. We do not have much music worth hearing in Rome, so we doubly enjoy what the gods send us. Sgambati's concert last week began with that adorable overture to Fingal's Cave. Cotogni, an old singer (sixty-eight is old to sing in concerts), sang well with the remains of a glorious bass voice which he handled like a delicate soprano. He is just back from St. Petersburg, where he has been the director of the Conservatory for twenty years. I heard him again at Mme. Patti's concert. They sang "*la ci darem la mano*" from "Don Giovanni," which they had last sung together in their early youth. The gallant manner in which the old singer handed out the *diva* was very nice. Mme. Patti is here on a wedding-tour with her husband,—Baron Cedarstrom,—a young Swede twenty-eight years old who used to take care of her throat. She wore a pretty lilac dress which smelt of Paris and the Rue de la Paix.

Signor Sgambati is responsible for the best music we have. He is a true musician, a delightful composer, and the most enchanting person. Of course, you know his compositions; the Boston Orchestra lately gave his symphony. Some time ago he was on the point of leaving Rome for London, where they were on their knees for him to come: the musical people and critics were waiting with open arms to receive him. He went to the station, weighed his luggage, bought his ticket, was just about to get on the train, when he realized that he was leaving Rome! That was more than he had bargained for! It was one thing to go to London, another to leave Rome! He calmly returned to his quiet house and his piano in the Via della Croce, and has remained there ever since, the friend of the Queen, of all true artists, of every starving musical genius brought to his notice. That such a man should endure the drudgery of giving music lessons is a fearful waste; the musical world should do for him what it did for Wagner.

If you only stay long enough in Rome you meet everybody you ever heard of: all the world comes here sooner or later. The best thing about the social life is its cosmopolitan quality. Among the people we see most are a Greek woman (I had almost written goddess), a Dutchman, a Swede, a Dane, a Turk, an Irish priest, a French Protestant pastor, and young Paul Loyson, son of Père Hyacinthe, who

is making a name for himself in literature. American Protestant houses are no-man's-land, neutral ground: we have visitors of every faith and of all parties. One Sunday afternoon the President of Radcliffe, the Master of Groton, and the Director of the American College chanced to meet at tea in my salon. There are a dozen different cliques, all more or less linked together—artistic, musical, political, exclusive. The people who form smart society are far more cultivated than the corresponding class with us, or, I fancy, in England.

We have lately returned from an old-furniture hunt at Viterbo. We found no furniture, but the most picturesque Roman Gothic town I have seen. When I first knew Italy Viterbo had a bad name for brigands. The railroad has been open only four years; I hear no more of brigands, though I suspect several of my Viterbo acquaintances once belonged to the band. The place is not yet tourist stricken. We slept in a grim caravansary and went to a villanous *trattoria* for our meals, where we were poisoned by the food. A twenty-four-hour fast brought us all round. Viterbo is a gray fourteenth-century town with massive stone walls and turrets. It has many handsome buildings, some fair pictures, good Etruscan and Roman antiquities, but the most admirable thing about it is its wonderful completeness. Everything hangs together architecturally, the parts are subservient to the whole, the result—grace, harmony, repose! Shall we ever learn the trick?

From Viterbo we drove to the estate of the Duke of Lante, one of the most famous Italian villas. The present Duke has an American mother and wife. We had a letter of introduction from a mutual friend. All the grown-up people of the family were absent. We were received by two tiny fairies in pink calico, who took us each by a hand and led us through the garden to see the oaks, the famous bronze fountain, and the interesting house. I never have had so lovely an escort or a kinder welcome than the little ladies of the Villa Lante gave us.

February 26, 1898.

You will like to hear about a day of pure delight. I left home, duty, and family, and went off with Donna Primavera for an outing at Ostia. We started at ten in the morning, returned at six at night. I had been there before on my bicycle—it is a capital road—but saw nothing. Ostia is an ancient Roman commercial town founded by Ancus Martius, the fourth of the Roman kings; that takes it back to the sixth century B.C. The ruins of Ostia are on the banks of the Tiber. From here the fleets of merchant galleys sailed away to Greece and Africa. I felt that I was penetrating into the business life of the Romans as never before. Of course, I knew vaguely that there was a great commerce underlying the whole vast scheme, supporting the army and the art, but I was not prepared for the illumination I re-

ceived in wandering through the old warehouses, where we found rows of vast amphoræ (earthenware jars) which had contained wine, oil, and grain. Trade was as important in the time of Augustus as it is in the days of McKinley. The fleets that sailed into the harbor of Ostia brought nothing more precious than the marbles from Paros and Africa. It is said of Augustus that he found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble. The threshold of the temple at Ostia is a single slab of *affricano* sixteen feet long, delicious in color—rose, gray, and black blended in the most adorable mottlings. Signor Lanciani tells me they have lately discovered a large cargo of precious marbles at or near Ostia which has been lying waiting perhaps two thousand years for the hand of the builder. I should like to have a piece of it. In Rome one learns to appreciate marbles. I point out the different varieties to all the friends from home I pilot about the city (there are plenty of them), and it is a rare thing to find one who knows the difference between *cipollino* and *serpentino*. Tell that to the Kindergartenins!

April 16, 1899.

Waked up at dawn this morning by the rattling of cabs and carriages and the footsteps of sixty thousand people going to St. Peter's to celebrate the twenty-first anniversary of the Pope's coronation. I had not meant to go,—these functions are such an old story to me,—but I could not resist the magnetism of the crowd. The Borgo and the Piazza were black with people. Before the obelisk a double cordon of troops stretched across the whole Piazza—government troops, you understand; the government keeps order when the Pope goes to St. Peter's and is responsible for his safety. The Borgo is perhaps the safest place to live in that exists; I have never heard of any other so carefully guarded. Inside the Vatican the papal troops keep order. At a certain point behind the church two sentinels pace their beat, the spot where they meet marking the line of the exterritorial limits of the Vatican. One wears the King's uniform, one the Pope's; they appear to be on friendly terms.

My ticket admitted me to the bronze door. The crush going up the steps was terrific; once inside the church, all was well. I never have known a panic or a stampede in all the many crowds I have seen gather across the way. In the days of the Cæsars the Romans learned how to behave at a great pageant; they have never forgotten the lesson. The Roman crowd is the best behaved and most good-natured in the world. Of course, there are always people who feel the effects of being in such a crush; I saw three women faint and one man "tumble in a fit" to-day. They were immediately carried to one of the hospitals fitted up in various parts of the building on all such occasions. While a great function was going on (I think it was a beatification) a child was once born in St. Peter's.

An aisle was kept open, by means of movable benches, leading from the Chapel of the Sacrament, which communicates with the Vatican, to the papal throne, placed for the first time since 1870 under the chair of St. Peter at the end of the basilica. The walls were hung with miles of crimson velvet and brocade. I like the church better plain, but it made a "soomptuous melée" of color. I saw the Crown Princess of Sweden and the Countess of Trani, sister of the Empress of Austria, in the royal tribune. The costumes of the papal court are simply enchanting. The red and yellow uniform of the Swiss Guard never palls; it was designed by Michael Angelo, who had some taste. The chamberlains in black velvet doublets and knee breeches, with stiff white ruffs and thick gold chains of office, looked so handsome it was hard to recognize them. The ambassadors wore their best togs, the noble ladies (they are obliged to go in black) all their jewels. The plebs in their way were quite as decorative as the patricians,—peasants with goatskin trousers and *cioce*, monks and nuns of every order, flocks of students from the theological seminaries in the dress Dante wore. The German students in vermilion habits—the scarlet tanagers of the Roman landscape—are the finest. The Pope was due at ten; at quarter before eleven the cardinals began to arrive. Their dress is admirable; it never looks so well as when they are marching down the aisle at St. Peter's. At eleven the Pope appeared in the gestatorial chair carried by eight lackeys in crimson brocade: Michael Angelo, they say, designed this livery too. The tall white feather fans carried in the procession reminded me of a bas-relief on the walls of the ruins at Karnac in Egypt representing the Pharaoh going in triumph to the temple. Pharaoh's chair was not unlike the *sedes gestatoria*, the feather fans seem identical, the triple crown of the Pope very like the crown of Upper and Lower Egypt worn by Rameses. In the midst of all this swirl of color Leo's alabaster face with the eyes of brown fire. When he rose feebly to give the benediction his hands looked transparent. There was even more shouting "*Viva il papa ré!*" than usual. The Pope is as exquisitely *soigné* as a young belle; his valet, Pio Centra,—one of whose duties is to taste everything his master eats or drinks,—certainly knows his business. Centra is a great personage and is kowtowed to by the people about the Vatican.

The Pope safely on his throne, I did not care to wait for the service and watched my chance of getting out. I edged my way to the vicinity of one of the exits and waited. I soon saw a gigantic German student—he must have been six feet six inches tall—who was evidently of the same mind about going. I managed to slip in behind him and follow in the wake he made. When we were close to the door the press was so great that I really was frightened; in another moment I should have been separated from my giant. In desperation I seized

the streamers of red broadcloth that hung from his shoulders. He looked behind him, saw a woman, fancied the de'il was after him, and fled for his life, cleaving the solid wall of people with his mighty elbows. The faster he ran the tighter I held on, till at last he brought us both through that awful pressure—I thought it would break my ribs—down the steps and out into the Piazza, where I let him go. I am not sure which of us was the more frightened!

One of the *Guardia Nobile* (the Pope's noble guard) told me that in the year 1889 he was on duty in the Pope's antechamber the night after the dedication of the statue of Giordano Bruno—a renegade Dominican or a great reformer, according to your politics—on the very spot where in 1600 he was burned at the stake for heresy. The Pope was much offended, felt the Church had been insulted; there was even talk of removing the seat of the papacy from Rome. That plan, if it ever was seriously considered, was soon given up. The whole matter had agitated the Pope tremendously, and they felt anxious about his health. When the usual hour passed for his light to be put out they grew more and more nervous. Eleven, twelve, one o'clock, still that thin line of light under the door. Finally they knocked. No answer. They gently opened the door and saw the old man kneeling weeping at his priedieu. Our friend, a man of the world, had been deeply moved by that glimpse through the open door. As for me, "'tis as if I'd seen it all."

Like Pius, Leo began by trying for a liberal policy. The power behind the throne—the *Intransigentes*—was too strong for him. When he was elected he wished to give his benediction to the people in the Piazza outside from the window over the door of St. Peter's, like his predecessors. This was opposed, but the news spread through the city that the new Pope stood firm. The Piazza was crammed with waiting people; at the Quirinal the royal carriage stood ready to bring the Queen to the Piazza to receive the blessing. Those who watched with glasses saw a small white figure hurrying down the passage which leads to the window. The Pope was coming! Suddenly the white figure hesitated, paused, turned back, retreated. The way had been barricaded with benches!



THE WEAR AND TEAR

BY CARRIE BLAKE MORGAN

GREAT souls arise to great emergencies,
 But falter often in the lesser fray,
 Unnerved, distraught, by life's small urgencies—
 The rasping wear and tear of every day.

THE ADVENTURES OF AMARYLLIS

By Phæbe Lyde



IT was a balmy March morning; the city of Charleston lay bathed in sunshine. A young man, coming along the High Battery with a bull-terrier at his heels, paused to glance at the sparkling harbor and Fort Sumter, set like a jewel against the horizon, then went his way to the little Battery Park. He was a short, strongly built fellow, in nondescript attire, a soft hat squashed somewhat to the side of his auburn head; he had a freckled, clean-shaven countenance, while the childlike innocence of his brown eyes was slightly contradicted by a mouth at once shrewd, firm, and humorous, and a Roman nose most scientifically broken. He had registered at the St. John's Hotel as William R. Hall, Jr., New York, and his dog, Nebuchadnezzar, a sporting personage with large blue eyes and a brindled hind leg, answered to the name of Neb.

Mr. Hall strolled about under the live-oaks, apparently in search of a familiar face; indeed, most of his short sojourn at Charleston had been spent in dawdling upon the Battery, where, being of an observant habit and also more romantic than his appearance might have suggested, his fancy had been greatly struck by another solitary figure. This was a tall, slender girl, in rusty mourning, who was generally sitting in the sunshine, a book on her lap, and her dreamy gaze fixed upon the horizon. She was a delicate, fragile creature, with a little head, balanced like a lily on its stalk, masses of shining hair black as the raven's wing, and deep violet-blue eyes; she was always alone, and seemed too much absorbed to notice a broken-nosed young man accompanied by a bull-terrier and a briarwood pipe. On this particular morning, however, the girl was not in her accustomed place, and William Hall felt most unreasonably aggrieved,—her absence threw all his day out of joint,—and after futilely patrolling both Batteries he returned, cross enough, to luncheon.

In the afternoon Fortune, being of the feminine gender, took him back into favor.

He had started in search of an old curiosity shop, and his way led him past Marion Square, on whose sandy expanse the cadets were drill-

ing; behind them rose the low, gray walls of the Citadel, crowned by a fluttering palmetto flag; while from his lofty pedestal Calhoun, champion of a lost cause, grimly confronted Fate. The young man lingered for a moment, watching the boyish figures; then, pursuing his route, became entangled in a network of quaint streets. He went on, idly enough, amused by the curious foreign atmosphere of his surroundings, the stuccoed houses, their faded tints turned by the sea-air into delicious harmonies of pink and yellow; the long, double galleries with dull-green lattices, through which one could imagine a pair of bright eyes watching; the charming old brick walls, veiled in ivy; low, white buildings and shining, tiled roofs, deep-pillared doorways, delicately fanciful iron railings—all the myriad details which make Charleston so enchantingly picturesque.

Suddenly, out of a squalid little court by which he was passing, rose a hubbub of negro accent, a brutal, almost animal clamor; Neb stopped, pricking up his ears, while his master shot a keen glance athwart the lengthening sunrays. Through the ugly din pierced a different note, a woman's voice, trembling, shrill, yet sweet,—“No, no,” it cried, “you must not touch her!”

“By God!” said William Hall between his teeth, “it's a white woman!” Next moment he and Neb had charged down the court, scattered the motley colored group of spectators, and confronted the chief actors—a big, burly, insolent negro and a tall, fragile, blue-eyed girl, to whose skirt a frightened little negress was clinging.

The girl gave a cry of joy as the man and dog appeared, while the negro slunk back, putting up his arm to ward off the impending fist; but the centre-rush was too quick for him, and a terrific blow sent him reeling and senseless on the cobbles, while Neb's teeth met in his ankle.

“You black hound!” said the young man, livid with rage, “let that teach you to insult a lady.” He thrust a handful of silver at the little negress. “Be off with you,” he said shortly, and as the small creature darted away with her booty William Hall tucked a trembling gray glove under his arm, whistled Neb to his heels, and strode vengefully past the frightened, huddling groups of subservient blacks.

For a few moments the man and girl walked on swiftly and in silence. He was still too angry to trust himself to speak, and she apparently too frightened, but a sudden suspicious sound made him turn sharply towards his companion, and he saw to his horror that her blue eyes were running over with tears. “Oh, dear,” she said piteously, “I'm so sorry, but I'm afraid I've lost my pocket-handkerchief!”

William Hall gave a desperate glance around, and then with great presence of mind executed a brilliant flank movement into a friendly churchyard, where he seated the distressed damsel on a massive slab

of tombstone, and, placing himself beside her, pressed into her hand a large and immaculate square of linen cambric. In this she immediately buried her face, and William Hall possessed himself of one of the gray gloves, which he held in a firm and kindly clasp, while Neb put a dusty paw on her knee, wagged his tail, and licked the clasped hands with impartial sympathy.

"You poor little girl," said William Hall in a parental tone (she overtopped him by half a head). "Cry as much as you like, my dear child; don't mind me. Neb, you ruffian," he continued, "who gave you leave to lick that young lady's hand? Get down, sir, instanter."

The young lady suddenly came out of the handkerchief, and drawing away her hand put it caressingly on Neb's head.

"No, please," she said, "let him stay; I like him." She dried her eyes, blew her dear little nose with great simplicity, and smiled frankly into William Hall's freckled countenance. "How silly you must think me; and, indeed, I'm not at all a crying sort of person. It's because I've been ill, and I suppose I'm still rather weak, and, oh, I was so dreadfully frightened."

William Hall's brow clouded. "Of course you were frightened. Good right too. Lord, it makes me sick to think of those beasts near you. Look here, you know, your people oughtn't to let you run around alone. How on earth did you get into that mess?"

"Why, I lost my way," she answered, "and, walking rather fast, knocked against that little girl. So I stopped to speak to her and gave her something, and then that dreadful man came out and said she must give it to him, and threatened to strike her when I said no—and then they all came crowding round." She gave a shudder. "Oh, don't, don't talk of it any more! Besides,"—her eyes filled again,— "there isn't anyone here with me. Indeed, I have no relations anywhere. My dear father died two years ago, and there's no one left but Aunt Selina, and she's not a real aunt, only Uncle Mac's widow."

"What an infernal shame!" said William Hall hotly. He became conscious of a desire to endow this young woman at once with a whole tribe of doting relatives. "But then why—what are you at here? I beg your pardon, I oughtn't to be asking questions."

The girl dried her eyes once more and smiled at him. "That's all right," she said; "I don't mind telling you. I'm from the North too; I live in Vermont, and my name is Amaryllis Mead,—it sounds rather fanciful, Amaryllis, doesn't it?—but my mother was from South Carolina; that's the reason I wanted to come here. She died when I was a little girl, and father and I lived on together. He was a minister, and when he died I became a school-teacher; you see, there isn't much to tell. Then I was very ill last winter with grip, so they gave me a holiday and I persuaded another girl to come to Charleston with me;

but she had to go off suddenly on account of bad news. I could not afford to waste the ticket and all, and I wanted so much to stay,—so I just did,—though I must say it's very dull being all alone."

William Hall nodded gravely. "Yes," he said, "I know how that is; I've been there myself. By the by, how much longer do you stay?"

"Only a week," she answered. "I'm afraid that's all I can afford."

William Hall leaned from his perch upon the tombstone and began plucking violets among the grass, an exertion which made him somewhat red in the face. "See here," he said, as he plucked, "I've struck rather a notion. You don't know me, but I ain't a bad sort of chap."

"Why, of course you're not," she interrupted eagerly. "You know I've seen you several times on the Battery, and once you picked up a child that fell, and to-day you knocked down that horrid man—I'm sure you are very nice indeed."

A slight twinkle crept into William Hall's large, brown orbs. "That seems rather a feminine point of view," he said. "Picking people up and knocking people down can hardly constitute a certificate of character; but seeing it's me we'll let it pass. However, the point is this. My name is William Hall ('as I sailed, as I sailed') and I really am a perfectly respectable person, though I come from New York, and I—ahem—I think I shall have to spend a week in Charleston myself. Now, as we're both strangers and pilgrims, and I can't bear to think of your getting into any more scrapes up alleyways, I propose we make a sort of pilgrimage together. I'll come to your hash-house every day, and we'll just do the city of Charleston up brown. What do you say?"

The girl looked at him rather doubtfully, but there was something in William Hall's freckled visage that inspired confidence, and his brown eyes met hers fair and square.

"I—I don't know," she faltered; "it sounds like a pleasant plan, but don't you think it might bore you——"

"My dear Miss Mead," he cried, "if you take pity on me it will be a Godsend. Why, the last three days I've been ready to blow my brains out and kick myself round the block for a fool to boot."

She nodded her pretty head. "I thought you looked rather serious; you know how one tells one's self stories about people. I was afraid you were in trouble."

"I am rather down on my luck," he admitted sadly, "but, of course, you needn't consider that."

"Oh, but I need," said the girl. "It would make all the difference if I could really help you." She rose, regarding him with serious eyes.

"You could," replied Mr. Hall in a tone of conviction.

"Well, then,"—she blushed delightfully,—"I'm going to tea now, and we'll meet at the Battery to-morrow."

He held out a brown paw. "Shake," he said; "you can bank on me." And this ceremony accomplished, he put her on a Rutledge Avenue car and watched it whiz away towards the sunset.

Then he drew from his pocketbook the following telegram:

"Water-Witch stops several days at Palm Beach. Don't go back on us. Wire plans Ponciana."

"NINA."

Having read this message twice over, Mr. Hall slowly tore the slip of yellow paper into small fragments, which he cast upon the whirling March wind.

When Miss Amaryllis Mead came round the corner of Church Street next morning she found a broken-nosed gentleman gazing patiently at the white steeple of St. Michael's. He jumped up as the girl approached, while Neb wagged and barked in salutation.

"Hullo," said William Hall, "here you are. I was beginning to be afraid you'd funk'd the show."

Miss Mead looked rather puzzled. "You mean you thought I wouldn't come? Oh, but I always keep my word; I thought it over last night, and I was sure father wouldn't mind my helping anyone who was in trouble."

William Hall's sunburnt face became a trifle redder. "I can promise you," he said earnestly, "that we won't do anything that your father could possibly mind. Hi, Neb, you fool, let that baby-carriage alone. And now," he resumed, "what is the programme for this morning? Shall we go right out and start with the Exposition?"

"Oh, no," she answered, "we will wait for that. You see, I haven't much money, so I must plan things out, and I'd like to see the city first. I was too tired when I came, but now I want to explore; it will be such fun, for I have hardly ever been away before."

They moved towards South Bay as she spoke, and her blue eyes glanced about, sparkling with youth and joy; William Hall considered them much the prettiest point in the landscape.

"Here's rather a jolly street," he suggested. "Suppose we try it."

The girl walked up Legare Street as though treading on air, exclaiming and delighted; William Hall was under the impression that he had never before appreciated the charms of sightseeing. At the corner of Tradd they stopped to peer through a great iron gateway into an enchanting garden, guarded by high brick walls, sweet with spring flowers, and melodious with the mocking-birds' songs.

"Oh, isn't it too delicious!" she cried. "And can't you just imagine yourself back in the eighteenth century?"

Mr. Hall's historic imagination was not usually vivid, but he carried it to the length of considering how Miss Mead would have looked in powdered hair and a Watteau sacque, and admitted this to be a charming picture.

Well, what a morning they had: St. Michael's and St. Philip's; the Library and the Huguenot Church; the old Powder Magazine and the City Hall. Amaryllis did not spare him a single inscription, down to "the miraculous interposition of Providence by means of a button," on the tombstone in St. Philip's churchyard. At last he beguiled her into the Woman's Exchange for luncheon, explaining that he had a little spare cash bestowed upon him by a relative.

"And I'm such an awful ass about money; if you don't help me use it, ten chances to one I'd do some fool thing like playing the races."

"Oh," said Amaryllis, "but that wouldn't be right."

"Especially if I lost," he agreed, "which I'm very apt to do."

"How do you manage to leave your business at this time of year?"

"Why," said William Hall, "fact is, I'm out of a job just now. You see I was on a boat, and—er—had a sort of misunderstanding—"

"With the captain?" she inquired sympathetically.

"N-no, with—with one of the owners. So, to tell the truth, I chucked the whole shooting-match, and here I am on the loose."

"But you will be looking out for something else to do, won't you?" she asked deprecatingly. "It's a terrible thing for a man to be idle."

"So the governor always says," returned Mr. Hall. "The old man's down on me like blazes."

"I suppose your father works hard himself?"

"He certainly does that."

"And your mother, what is she like?"

"Well, she's pretty strenuous too; the Mater's a good woman. I'm the only brother, and Polly's still in the schoolroom, so her little nose is at the grindstone all right. Then there's Jane. I can tell you, Jane is up and doing."

"I think a girl ought to have an object in life," said Amaryllis seriously.

"Jane's got an object in life all right," retorted Jane's brother. "And a rum-looking object he is; but I think she'll pull it off this time. The Dowager's so very down on her it helps Jane's book."

The girl looked up through her long eyelashes, with her pretty, direct glance. "Do you know," she said, "I often don't understand what you mean."

Mr. Hall's mouth being full of *charlotte russe*, he merely mumbled that he always understood what Jane meant, and that was business.

When he next spoke it was to ask irrelevantly how Miss Mead would like to be a marchioness; to which she replied, "Very much, if the marquises were nice."

"Ah, that's it," said William Hall. "Many a marquis is tottery on his pins, I can promise you." And Miss Mead admitted she certainly wouldn't like that kind.

"My sister Jane," declared William Hall solemnly, "would take a marquis if he hadn't a leg to stand on. Speaking of legs," he went on, "where does this procession go next?"

But Miss Mead announced she must return to her boarding-house, whither, being a shrewd young man, he allowed her to depart, merely stipulating that he should be permitted to worship in her company on the morrow.

Indeed, they not only shared a hymnal at St. Michael's, but by some nefarious arts she was induced to forego evensong and accompany him to Magnolia. Amaryllis could never have explained how she found herself sitting on the farthest verge of the cemetery, looking across the rippling curve of river, and telling her new friend of her old life, while William Hall smiled benignantly upon her.

Monday afternoon saw the pilgrims embarked for Fort Sumter. The sunshine was dancing on the water, and the soft breeze constantly blew against Miss Mead's wild-rose cheek a loose tendril of hair, which Mr. Hall desired exceedingly to twist about his finger. She was rather silent as they wandered about the ramparts, and seeing that she was moved he walked quietly beside her. As the boat started she looked back at the flag with shining eyes.

"It's curious," she said. "At home I always am so proud of my Southern blood; but when I see the Stars and Stripes floating on that fort it makes my heart beat."

"You're an American," he answered, "and a bully good thing to be too. But I tell you Johnny Reb put up a thundering good fight against the Yanks. I guess you can hurrah for both sides. Lord, when I remember those fellows, it makes me mad to hear people crowing about our little scrap at San Juan."

"Oh," she cried eagerly, "were you really at San Juan? Were you wounded?"

"No, I wasn't," said William Hall tersely. "And I never had typhoid fever or any other old thing, and I didn't give a damn—excuse me—for Cuba or the Cubans. I just went for a lark, and saw a lot of better chaps than me taken to kingdom come. War is no joke, though the fighting's good fun enough."

When they had landed and were walking homeward he proposed taking a rest on the steps at the end of South Battery, and Miss Mead obligingly sat down upon the overcoat he spread.

It was a still, golden evening; the water lapped softly at their feet; across its shimmering surface a little, green boat-house opposite cast translucent reflections; far out on the river two negro voices were chanting a wild and wailing cadence. Amaryllis watched the gleaming oars rise and fall in the distance.

"How nice it must be to own a boat," she said. "Did you see that beautiful yacht, the Water Witch, when she was in the harbor last week?"

William Hall, who was deeply engaged over his matchbox, muttered an indefinite assent.

"I saw some of the people coming ashore," she went on. "I was fascinated by one girl, a little creature, like a fairy, with pale golden hair, and such big, black eyes. She didn't look happy though. I wondered why."

Her companion offered no conjecture, and Amaryllis continued musingly:

"How oddly fashionable people talk. She was sitting near me one day with a handsome, disagreeable-looking man, and I heard her say, 'Oh, Billy's got an awful grouch; there's no pleasing him.' And the man laughed and said, 'You'd better reserve your fire for me, Nina. I'm warranted to fall at the first shot; whereas I suspect our beloved Bill of having the ten commandments up his sleeve and a New England conscience in his pocket.' I got up then and went away, for, of course, I didn't want to listen."

Mr. Hall knocked the ashes from his pipe, which he proceeded to fill and relight; after puffing for a time he said carelessly,—

"Suppose a woman had married a man who was a bit of a brute, and treated her badly; and suppose there was another fellow who felt sorry for her and tried to make things easier, and after a while the other fellow found he was beginning to like her too much?"

"But that would be wrong," said Amaryllis, looking at him with her direct, childlike glance.

"I know," replied the young man. "People do wrong things sometimes. The point is—how do you think the other fellow should behave?"

"Why, of course, he ought to go away and not see her any more," she answered simply.

"And what about her? You see, she might have got to rather depend on him?"

"All the more reason for him to go; no good woman would want to be depending on a man if it wasn't right."

"I see," said William Hall. "Well, suppose the fellow did get out, and pretty soon he came across a girl that he really liked, honest Injun, for keeps, this time—how do you think the woman would feel then?"

Amaryllis had to ponder this question; it was more complicated.

"Well," she answered finally, "I daresay it would be natural for her to be a little sorry, but I'm sure she would be glad too, especially if it were a nice girl, who liked the man, and made him happy."

"I see," said William Hall again. "Perhaps you're right." He sat quietly for some moments looking southward, then he rose, holding out his hand to Amaryllis.

"Hop up, chicken, I can't have you sitting in the damp after the sun's gone. Besides, we have the Exposition before us to-morrow. Come along."

It would be impossible to describe all the things they did and saw on that Tuesday at the Exposition, or the reckless way with which Mr. Hall scattered small change until absolutely commanded to stop. Miss Mead was particularly pleased with the old portraits in the Art Building.

"We have a Copley, and some Sullys too," she announced with modest pride. "Aunt Selina keeps them for me. Do you know, four of my ancestors were Colonial Governors."

"Good business," responded William Hall; "I have one grandfather who was a miner."

"Oh," said Amaryllis with a slight gasp. Presently she added sweetly, "But I shouldn't care, if I were you."

"I don't," said William Hall, "I rather like it."

"I suppose he was a good miner and a credit to his family," she suggested.

"He was all of that," William Hall declared; "and I only wish my credit was half as good. Now, young woman, you'll have to hustle if we get tea in Fair Japan before nightfall."

Yes, that certainly was a day to be remembered!

But perhaps it is wiser not to repeat experiments, for when they returned to the Exposition on Wednesday things went rather askew. There was a difference of opinion about wheeled chairs, in which Miss Mead carried the day; and at luncheon William Hall sulkily stated that when he was married and settled his wife should always go in a wheeled chair, even if it were to cross the street.

Miss Mead looked a little startled and inquired whether Mr. Hall were engaged. Somehow she had not contemplated that contingency.

Mr. Hall replied that he was not, but soon would be, if he had any luck; he further added that he was unfit to black the lady's boots, but judging from the vagaries of the female sex, he hoped that might be in his favor; and Miss Mead then asking as to the lady's appearance, he described her as being under five feet, with bright red hair and green eyes.

"Oh," said Amaryllis faintly, "she—she must be very pretty, I'm sure. And do your family like her?"

"I'll know the reason why if they don't," said William Hall. "Oh, a family tree squares mamma, Polly's game anyhow, and the old man will be thankful to see me with a running mate. As for Jane and her object, they may go to Jericho." At which pleasing prospect the young man quite recovered his temper, and, jumping up, cheerfully announced that it was time to go to the races.

But it appeared Miss Mead did not intend going to the races; she had conscientious scruples about them—in fact, had already refused on that account to go with Mr. Weekes.

"With whom?" asked William Hall, black as thunder.

"Mr. Weekes, a school-teacher, who is at our boarding-house."

"And what the devil does Mr. Weekes mean by his invitations?" said William Hall, sitting down again in his wrath. "Why, what do you know about the fellow—I mean—I don't see how that prevents your going with me," he ended rather lamely.

But the girl shook her head. "No," she said, "that wouldn't be right. I couldn't say one thing and do another."

"Well, upon my word," the young man began, but he saw her trembling lips. "All right, dar—Miss Mead," he continued gently. "I won't tease you about it. We'll just do something else now, then we'll stay and dine at the Crescent Inn, so as to see the lights this evening. Hullo, what's up?" for Miss Mead's blue eyes had filled.

"Oh, dear," she faltered, "I—I can't—for, you see, I—Mr. Weekes seemed so disappointed that I promised that he should read his essay to me after supper—his graduating essay on 'Woman as a World Power.'"

Mr. Hall arose with dignity. "Of course, since you prefer Mr. Weekes's society——"

"It was a promise," said the girl. "Father told me never to break a promise. And—and now I believe I'm rather tired, so I will just go home."

They walked in silence to the exit, where Mr. Hall majestically assisted her into the car, then, begging she would excuse him if he returned to the races, he departed without once looking back.

If Amaryllis's eyes were rather red when she came down to supper, it was certainly no one's business, and want of appetite was, on the whole, a good thing for her fellow-boarders. After the evening meal she and Mr. Weekes established themselves on an oasis of red rep sofa, while a desert of unattached females gathered about the large centre-table.

At exactly quarter-past eight a loud peal was heard at the door-bell; a moment later a young man bearing a large bouquet entered the

apartment. His face and form were perhaps not strictly classic, but never before had the assembled company beheld such an immaculate shirt front, such a high turned-down collar, such a neat Tuxedo coat, such wonderfully creased trousers, or such glittering patent leather shoes. Mr. Weekes, a gaunt, rawboned personage, with an abnormal development of wrist and ankle, suddenly became conscious of all his shortcomings, while Amaryllis blushed divinely.

"Mrs. Robinson?" inquired the newcomer, addressing the most depressed of the unattached females. "Good-evening, Ma'am. This is Mr. William Hall, from New York; I just stopped in to speak to my cousin, Miss Mead. Good-evening, Cousin Amaryllis." He nodded affably towards the sofa. "I want to arrange about a little drive we are to have to-morrow, and I took the liberty of bringing a few flowers with me." He deftly divided the bunch, and having pressed her share upon Mrs. Robinson, walked across and deposited the remainder on Miss Mead's lap.

"Don't rise, my dear," he said in a paternal manner; "I remember that you had an engagement with Mr.—Mr. Creeks?"

"Weekes," said that gentleman gloomily.

"Oh—ah—yes, Beaks," continued William Hall. "And as I said this afternoon, when we discussed remaining to dine at the Exposition, of course, it is never right to break an engagement. But it does not matter, as we can do it to-morrow instead; your Cousin Leonora will expect an account of the illuminations. My mother is most anxious for Miss Mead to enjoy Charleston," he pursued, again addressing his hostess, "and I am sure you will agree that she must not miss the electric lighting."

As he spoke William Hall fixed his large and innocent eyes full upon Mrs. Robinson, while Miss Mead, with awful recollections of Ananias and Sapphira, listened involuntarily for the feet of the young men on the staircase.

However, nothing in the nature of a judgment occurred, and William Hall, turning his back to the sofa, sat for about twenty minutes in a large rocker, talking with bewildering politeness to the circle of ladies. Then, pleading an engagement at the Club, he rose, and again approached his relative.

"Good-night, Cousin Amaryllis," he said; and such is the force of bad example that as Miss Mead took his extended hand a murmuring voice replied, "Good-night, cousin."

A flickering gleam of triumph lit William Hall's countenance.

"I'll come to-morrow afternoon," he went on. "Good-evening, Mr.—ah—Meeks; I am sure my cousin enjoys the reading. Mrs. Robinson, I shall hope to see you shortly."

When Mr. Hall returned to Rutledge Avenue next day each old lady

was looking out of a different window to see him drive up in the solitary hansom of the town, and Amaryllis attempted a faint protest at his extravagance.

"It's all right," he said. "Came out way ahead of the game with a long shot on a three-legged animal. You see the result of leaving your relative at the races."

The girl shook her head, smiling. "How could you behave so badly last night—telling such a dreadful story, and making me tell one too? I declare, I didn't know which way to look."

"You couldn't avoid looking at Mr. Peaks," he retorted. "Never saw such a chap for angles; he's like a what's-its-name in Euclid. But see here, Miss, before we go any further I want one thing distinctly understood. The word *no* is not to be used in my presence this evening. When I suggest going up in a balloon or down in a diving-bell I expect you to answer politely, 'Yes, if you please, I should like to very much.' Otherwise I won't play, and you can listen to Weekes on Woman till the cows come home."

It was sunset before they reached the Exposition, and the lights were already beginning to glitter like jewels against the golden west; high amid a rosy fleece of cloud sailed the white infant moon. The girl would gladly have lingered, but the young man beguiled her to the Crescent Inn, explaining that the illuminations would keep and dinner wouldn't; so she obediently seated herself at a little table adorned with a large bunch of roses.

"Why are we the only ones who have flowers?" she asked.

"Because we're the only ones here," he answered, at which retort the bevy of negro attendants sympathetically grinned.

It is not generally known that the Crescent Inn provides nectar and ambrosia; such was, indeed, the fact, yet neither of the young people seemed very hungry. Presently William Hall gave an order to the smiling head waiter, "The brand I told you yesterday," and the negro returned with a bottle of sparkling, golden liquid, which foamed in their glasses. Amaryllis sipped a little when he told her to drink to their next merry meeting. "Here's Luck," said the young man; he drank down his glass, refilled it, and with a quick turn of the wrist tossed glass and wine over his shoulder.

"Oh, you've broken it!" cried Amaryllis, as the tinkling fragments rang.

"It's a libation to Fate," he replied gravely. "Here, you black rascals, bring me the bill, and keep the rest of the champagne to drink our health."

They came out into an enchanted world. Hushed and silent lay the Court of Palaces, wall and dome and turret and minaret outlined in

living flame; overhead hung the eternal stars, and the plash of a fountain murmured softly below.

The young man suggested trying a gondola, and they strolled to the little lagoon. "Comé sta, Alessandro?" said William Hall to a tall gondolier. As he helped Amaryllis on board he told her it was an old Venetian acquaintance. The boat floated off, the ripples breaking away from her prow. Amaryllis sat in a trance of delight as a trio of male voices on the bank soared into song, a gay Italian ditty of love and youth, all soft syllables and melodious sounds.

When the song ceased and the boat turned back to the shore the girl cried out her pleasure; and William Hall said carelessly that he'd come across those chaps yesterday, rather down on their luck, and thought it might jolly them to do "a turn;" he was glad she fancied it.

They went up silently together, and with one accord stepped out on a bridge spanning the lagoon; they leant against the parapet and looked down at the stars mirrored in the dark water beneath. The girl's white hands were clasped, the young man could almost see them tremble. Suddenly Amaryllis caught her breath in a lingering sigh.

"Oh," she cried, "how happy it has all been! I wish—I wish it wasn't over!"

William Hall gave a curious, tender laugh. "It needn't ever be over unless you like. It's up to you to name the day." He pulled off his hat and held out his strong right hand. "Amaryllis," he said,—his voice was rough and shaken,—“will you be my wife and let me take care of you always?"

The girl turned her childlike face and shining eyes towards him. She laid her soft hand in his firm and gentle clasp. "Oh, yes," she murmured, with a new and delicious coquetry; "yes, if you please. I should like to very much."

There is really nothing more to tell. Let the young people see visions, and the old folk dream dreams; those who have been in Arcadia can remember it, and those who have yet to go may imagine its joys.

When they at last came back to earth William Hall agreed that they'd better be making tracks, or "Meeksy, old boy," would be out with the town crier; and as soon as they were in the car he began to explain that, of course, he would return with her next day.

"There's a chap and his wife at the St. John's, old pals of mine, on a honeymoon. She's delighted to have you under her wing as far as Boston. Then I'll bring mamma up to see Aunt Thingamy in a week or so, and we'll arrange about wedding garments."

Amaryllis stared at him with large, widely opened eyes. "Why,

what are you thinking of? We can't possibly be married for ever so long—you know I have only a tiny salary, and you're out of a job. Of course, I shall be careful, and I think I am a good manager, but people must have something to live on."

William Hall, looking slightly embarrassed, gazed for some moments at his boots; finally he broke into rather a guilty chuckle.

"I guess I'll have to own up. See here, darling, don't think I've been playing it on you, but the fact is I may have skipped a detail here and there. For instance, when I said my grandfather was a miner, I omitted to add a gold miner, also that he managed to yank out quite a little nugget heap."

"Well—but"—protested Miss Mead. "Why, you told me your father was so hard working."

"You bet," said William Hall stoutly. "He's right up against it in Wall Street, making a bigger pile every day."

"And your mother?" she faltered.

"Runs charities half her time, and 'sassiety' the rest, which is certainly a large order." He paused for comment, but as none came continued his confession. "Also my sister Jane has been laying for a marquis, and by latest quotations she's nabbed him. Suppose we have a double-barrelled event? Wouldn't you like to be married along of the aristocracy?"

He watched the girl furtively as he poured out this string of nonsense, but she remained silent, looking into the flying darkness. At last she showed rather an April countenance.

"I suppose it's all right," she sighed, "and I'll get used to it. But, oh, I think we should have been so happy, living in a little house in the country and working hard. I should have made such a good wife."

"And so you will," he cried eagerly; regardless of the conductor, he put his hand on hers. "Lord knows, I need one. And we'll have a country house, and work hard,—at least I will,—and we'll make a pilgrimage to Charleston once a year, and live happy ever after, just like a fairy story. Here, young man, stop. You've carried us three blocks too far."

The trolley came to a standstill, William Hall helped Amaryllis to alight, tucking her hand under his arm, and the two young people walked up Rutledge Avenue, their footsteps echoing in the silent street.

Ah, well, life is not all a fairy story, as most of us have found out; but there is never wanting a corner of fairyland to which true lovers may return long, long after youth is past and golden heads are gray.

AVOWALS

BEING THE SECOND OF A NEW SERIES OF
"CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN"

By *George Moore*

Author of "The Untilled Field," "Evelyn Innes," etc.



THE point of my last article, the idea that I wished to bring home to my readers, was that up to the present no English writer had succeeded in weaving prose tales out of as fine a mental substance as English poetry. But the tales of Balzac and Turgenieff are woven out of as fine a mental substance as the poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley, and the tales of such inferior tale-tellers as Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Huysmans out of as fine a substance as De Quincey's essays, Pater's musings, or Landor's dialogues.

In our literary inquest we stumbled across the curious fact that Turgenieff had failed to appreciate Balzac. He does not appear to have said more than that he did not think much of him. One day I shall read a life of Turgenieff and find out if he never expressed himself more fully on this subject, whether Turgenieff thought the subject unworthy of his further consideration or whether he wished to excite our curiosity, to tempt us to discover his meaning, as Goethe certainly did when he limited himself to the mere statement that it would have been better if Luther had never been born. Goethe was an Olympian prig, anxious that people should consider his words, but I do not think that Turgenieff was as anxious about his literary reputation. He said what he was minded to say,—that he did not think much of Balzac,—and there he left the matter as he left many other things—it was part of his genius to be able to put things aside, and he rightly regarded his inability to understand Balzac as unimportant to him.

But our position is somewhat different. We are not Olympians and are interested in literary history, and there is nothing in literary history more interesting than the inability of one man of genius to understand another; and Turgenieff's inability to understand Balzac is a flagrant case. But there are others as flagrant. Weber wrote an article jeering at Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony;" or was it at the "Eroica" that he jeered in the article that took the form of a dialogue between the different instruments and ended by the bass fiddle—or was

it the bassoon?—advising the others to cease talking, for if they were overheard they might have to play the whole thing over again next week as a punishment?

That Weber should not have understood the "Pastoral Symphony" seems incredible, but the reason of his failure is more incredible than the limitations of his musical tastes. I do not know if he ever described Beethoven's melodies as trivial, but many contemporary critics did, and Weber no doubt shared the prevailing feeling. The charge of triviality is the last we should prefer against Beethoven. As well might it be uttered against Shakespeare himself. Yet Beethoven's contemporaries were great men, and to appreciate their mistake we have to remember how ears filled with Mozart's ample melodies would hear the curt theme which starts the first movement in the "C Minor Symphony." Beethoven sought character and truth more earnestly than the early Mozart. He sought nature motives in the "Pastoral Symphony," and his contemporaries mistook naturalness for triviality. Their mistake is the usual mistake; it will echo down the ages for ever and ever; was it not repeated in the next generation, a generation protected against it, we should have thought, by the study of folk-lore? Ears accustomed to the obvious melodies of Rossini could barely hear the subtle melodies of "Tristan." Nor is the mistake confined to music. In the same years, in the seventies, the French salon painters looked upon the impressionists as trivial; and Fromentin, a considerable painter and a learned æsthetician, did not see the natural painter in Manet that we see, but a painter deficient in natural taste. I remember the time when Corot was thought flimsy, when Pelouse and C  sar De Cock—painters whose names probably no one of my readers has ever heard—were preferred to Corot. The Corot landscape was succeeded by the Monet; and Monet, who admired Corot above all painters, told me that one day he went into a picture-dealer's shop and overheard Corot saying that the picture which he, Monet, had induced the dealer to put in the window was a most shocking example of bad taste. Convinced though he was of his own genius,—and I remember how convinced he was,—it was a great blow to him to hear his picture laughed at by a man whom he put first among painters.

Every generation recants the artistic faith of the generation that it sprang from, and an interesting and a wise book might be written about these recantations. I shall never write the book, but could supply some anecdotes. Shall I ever forget Zola's sadness when I began my recantation? "Nature wills it so," he said, falling back into a deep divan; "I do not complain. Nature wills that the children should devour their fathers."



Turgenieff's inability to understand Balzac puzzled me for many years, but in thinking about the prose tale I have come to see that

Turgenieff's inability to understand Balzac was but the natural and inevitable consequence of his genius; I have even come to see that both men are implicit in Turgenieff's mistake; I have come to see that to understand this mistake is to understand Balzac and Turgenieff, and that to understand them is to understand the art of the prose tale.

In the course of my critical life I have compared Balzac to many things; and here it will suit me to compare him to a conqueror who invaded the whole of life, and who built cities; in the cities he built we find some fine palaces and many fine houses, and there are many beautiful things in these palaces and houses, beautiful statues and beautiful pictures. But this great Goth or Hun built no temple, no perfect portico; he carved no frieze; he built a magnificent city and passed on.

Balzac was without point of view, and his great empire is held together by intensity and energy of mind rather than by a single perception of life. But his vitality is sufficient. There is more vitality in a house described by Balzac than there is in many an English novel. He never wearies of describing chimney-piece ornaments, clock and candelabra, and in every description they live with extraordinary intensity. His mind vitalized brick and mortar—his mind was the mortar with which he built. He was interested in the whole of life, in the body as well as in the soul. He was interested in the clothes the body wore. He was interested in hats and neckties, in the watch in the fob, and in the rings on the fingers. He was interested in the buckles on a lady's shoes and in the coat of arms on her carriage. He is the only writer in whom we find everything, and he seems to have exhausted the possibility of fiction, for the writers that have succeeded him have done no more than to lead us into some unexplored corner of his genius. Sometimes the light that leads is a lamp, sometimes a taper. Flaubert and Huysmans tried to write more perfectly, and they produced wonderfully carven images, but Turgenieff was alone as human as Balzac. Balzac is the whole of man, whereas Turgenieff is the heart, the ceaseless throb of the heart that knows no change. He seems to have seen clearly from the beginning that life as we see it is full of folly and evil, that morality is a myth, an academic discussion, that beauty is a reality, and that it is wiser to follow beauty; that the artist can only teach by giving the world images of beauty to admire. He was passionately interested in the emancipation of the serfs, but he only advocated their emancipation indirectly. He limited his advocacy to describing their lives, their patient sufferings. In "The Memoirs of a Nihilist" he never once mentioned what were the acts that caused the man to be condemned to solitary confinement. He described his sufferings, his life between the four walls of his cell. Turgenieff was aware from the first that there is nothing vainer than preaching. As I have said, Turgenieff

seems to have understood from the beginning, and as if by instinct, that life as we see it is full of folly and evil. When I say life as we see it I mean the surface of life; for few look below the surface into the calm, eternal instincts. The instincts may be compared to the moveless depths of the sea whose gray-green twilights are the same as they were yesterday and yesterday the same as they were three hundred thousand years ago. The surface of life is agitated like the surface of the sea, it is full of strange and cruel life, ever at war, creatures preying on each other; but in the immortal instincts there is twilight and peace just as in the depths of the sea. Our instincts are almost as unknown to us as the green sea's depths, but Turgenieff was a plunger in the depths, the shadowy depths where nothing is seen but a shadowy rock, and in the rock a shadowy design, and Turgenieff's tales are but the reading of these shadowy designs.

Someone has said that a tale by Turgenieff is the most beautiful thing that art has given since antiquity, and this is the truth. Balzac is more astonishing and complete, and Michael Angelo is more astonishing and more complete than Phidias, but he is not so beautiful, he is not so perfect; and in the same way Turgenieff, though not so astonishing or so complete as Balzac, is always more beautiful and more perfect. Everything we say about Turgenieff we can say with equal truth about Phidias. Neither will ever be as much admired as Michael Angelo, nor will Beethoven ever be as much admired as Wagner, nor will Corot ever be as much admired as Duprez or Diaz, for art as it approaches the zenith sheds those outward signs of life by which the multitude recognize life. The circumstantial and the ephemeral alone interest the multitude, and the moment we begin a tale by Turgenieff we are amid the immemorial instincts, and the moment we look at a picture by Corot we are amid immemorial nature.

Everyone who will read this article has seen a picture by Corot, and will therefore understand what I mean by Corot's color mind. Those delicate grays which we find in his skies however blue they may be, that we find in the darkest shadows of his rocks however brown they may be, that gentle gray was the color of his mind, and the same gray was the color of Turgenieff's mind; and the illusive and intense souls that fill his pages appear and disappear enveloped in illusive grays. The temptation glides out of the mist like a phantom and the man follows, or maybe it is a woman that follows. And every tale is the same tale, and every tale is told with the same perfection. There are tales that he calls "Dream Tales," but all his tales were dream tales. In one of the "Dream Tales" a man wakes in the middle of the night hearing a sound, the sound of a harp-string, and a voice tells him to go next evening to the blasted oak by the edge of the common. He goes and meets a phantom, and the phantom tells him not to be afraid;

and they fly over the world and see many things. We are taken in this tale nearer to the verge of life than the harps of "Tristan" may take us, and they take us very near to it; we feel that the great secret is going to be revealed, and the moment is an intense one.

Only the greatest writers tell the same tale. The story of Liza in "The House of Gentle Folk" is the same. A man has made an unfortunate marriage, his wife has lovers, he leaves her; years pass and he hears she is dead; he believes her dead; and meeting a girl who loves him and whom he loves, it is agreed that they shall marry. But the wife returns, the girl tells the man that he must go back to his wife, the girl goes into a convent, and I believe he sees her once in the convent. That is all, and yet this is one of the most beautiful things ever written, and in its beauty very like Greek sculpture. Lavretsky comes back after many years and finds a new generation growing up. The garden is changed; trees have grown, and he sits on the seat where he sat with Liza. The young people want to play hide-and-seek, but the melancholy man intimidates them. . . . He begs of them to go and play, and he says, "We old people have a resource which you don't know yet, and which is better than any amusement—recollection."

These pages are as monumental as a landscape by Corot, and they are suffused with the same intense gray; they breathe an emotion as intense as any music breathes, whether we choose Schumann or Wagner or Chopin.

In "On the Eve" he tells of another young girl, and she the same age as Liza. Her parents are thinking of her marriage. Young men come to the house,—artists, politicians, and professors. A professor speaks to her about Goethe; the artist laughs at him. Helen says, "Why not?" At that moment we begin to know her. That "Why not?" is as extraordinary as any one of the motives in the "Ring." An hour later we see her sitting by her window facing the summer night. She feels something holy half rising out of, half falling into, her heart, and we know her to be the eternal maiden, she who looked at the stars ten thousand years ago, she who will look at them ten thousand years hence. The professor has stirred her heart, but he is not her predestined lover. The predestined lover is a Bulgarian, the professor's friend. But I am not interested to tell the story that Turgenieff tells; I love it well enough to refrain. It is many years since I have read this book, and were I to turn to it now I should lose the first impression. Memory is shadowy and incomplete, but I love my memory of this book, perhaps better than the book; in any case the new love would be different from the old. Like Lavretsky, I indulge in recollection. None will ever tell the tale of love's delight as well again. Helen holds happiness to her breast amid a Venetian spring, and happiness passes from her as the season passes. Her fate affects

us as no personal misfortune can affect us, for when her lover dies she goes we know not whither, but we hear her cry in the wilderness and we see her lonely as Hagar amid the rose granite rocks of Arabia under a lowering sky. This mention of Hagar will seem an irrelevancy; for me it is not one, for whenever I think of a tale by Turgenieff I think of a picture by Corot, and whenever I see a picture by Corot I think of a tale by Turgenieff.

◆

Turgenieff wrote a story called "Spring Floods." In it a man is about to marry a beautiful girl, but he meets the temptation that haunts all Turgenieff's stories and wastes his life following her. The story is as beautiful as any other he ever wrote, though Turgenieff himself thought it not sufficiently perfect in outline. He perfected the outline in a novel entitled "Smoke," and he lost some of the fresh color of the earlier tale. The beginning of "Smoke" is, however, one of the most memorable things in Turgenieff. A student is spending his holidays at Baden-Baden and a Russian countess calls at the young man's hotel, and not finding him in she leaves a bouquet of heliotrope for him. He puts the flowers in a glass of water and sits down to write letters. But the suave subtle odor disturbs him like something half remembered, half forgotten. He puts the glass away, finishes his letters, and goes to bed. The suave insinuating odor follows him into the next room and under the bedclothes.

I remember, as everyone remembers who has read it, the story of a man who hears a woman singing in Sorrento. He is in the street, and the windows of a house are open, and a beautiful voice singing some melody of Schubert or Schumann floats out into the night air. He hears the voice again in the Steppes in Russia. The windows of a lonely house are open, and he meets her again in a ballroom in Moscow. I remember no other fact, but I remember the emotion.

I remember no other fact. I only remember the emotion, the evocation of an immortal yearning by a voice heard in the streets of Sorrento, heard afterwards in the Steppes in Russia. There is in the story some mysterious correspondence between her appearance in Sorrento and her reappearance in the Steppes. What it is I do not remember, nor is it necessary that I should. The mystery of these hauntings is implicit in their mysterious reoccurrence; the same temptation occurring again amid other circumstances leads to a belief in an eternal return, in a fate from which we cannot fly, it being part of ourselves. In ancient Greece and Rome men met it in the woods; wandering in the woods they spied a glittering breast between the leaves and were forever after unable to love mortal woman. They knew the malady by the beautiful word *nympholepsy*. The word is in itself a temptation, and he who has been spared the disease feels that he has lost something. The ancient woods are now empty of dryad and nymph, but

the disease is with us still. Nor is it necessary to go to Sorrento to find it; many a man has found it amid the artificial glades of painted canvas. A nymph flying through the lime-light has inspired as deep a passion as a nymph flying through the reeds. I have known such a case. The victim sat out a hideous melodrama a hundred times for her sake. They only met once face to face, and then only for a minute. Her marriage and her death might have inspired Turgenieff. When I think of her I remember another story by Turgenieff, a story of a little clerk who went to hear an actress sing. The actress wrote to him, and the pathos in Turgenieff's story lies in the fact that the little clerk was loved when he thought he was being laughed at. To explain the fatality of these attachments Turgenieff speaks of the fish that swims to and fro under the boat apparently at liberty, though the hook is in its gills. Turgenieff knew the disease in all its diverse symptoms. Was he not at once the victim and the perfect chronicler of the disease?

◆

Whitman spoke of Turgenieff as "the noble and melancholy Turgenieff," and no words could describe him better. He also spoke of Turgenieff as "a most wonderful tale-teller," and the choice of the word proves Whitman to have been an artist even in his casual talk. The choice of the word proves that he understood Turgenieff as well as I understand Corot, and when I wrote my first article about Turgenieff many years ago I said, "These tales came from the East; he told tales, and we only write psychological novels." I expressed myself badly, for I then only had an inkling of the beauty I have learnt and that I am still learning to understand. Many things I have failed to understand, but two things I have understood—a tale by Turgenieff and a landscape by Corot.

Balzac and Wagner have exalted me; I have joined in their processional crowds and have carried a blowing banner. My life would have been poor without them, but neither has been as much to me as Turgenieff and Corot. Turgenieff and Corot have been the sacred places where I have rested and where I have dreamed; together they have revealed to me all that I needed. All things are contained in them. He who has seen Corot has seen all the universe, for what could we find in the furthest star more beautiful than evanescent cloud and a nymph gathering summer blooms by the edge of a lake. A cloud floats and goes out, and the blossoming wood is reflected in the lake, and lo! he has told us the tale of a spring morning. All the outward externalities of nature which Rousseau sought vainly to render Corot knew how to put aside. He knew that they were but passing things, just as Turgenieff knew that all the trivial disputes of the day are not worthy substances out of which to make art. These twin souls, the most beautiful ever born of woman, lived in the depths where all is still and quiet, where the larch bends and the lake mirrors a pellucid sky, where

a man longs for a woman that has been taken from him, where a woman holds her desire to her breast for a moment, loses it, and is heard of in Bulgaria as a nurse or is heard of as a Sister of Charity, but about whom nothing certain is known.

That Turgenieff loved Corot I think; I know that Monet loves Balzac. Monet is a small person compared to Balzac, but they are alike in this: that neither had a point of view, and perhaps this was why Corot did not like Monet any more than Turgenieff liked Balzac.



GOOD-BY

BY INGRAM CROCKETT

WHEN starry sweetgums by the way
 Turn dark maroon and red,
 When cynic dragonflies are gay,
 A low good-by is said:
 Heart music saddening earth and sky—
 Good-by, good-by.

When climbing buckwheat lifts its plumes
 Of greenish white and gold,
 And bees on wild sunflower blooms
 A last mad revel hold—
 With meeting of the lips—a sigh—
 Good-by, good-by.

When little butterflies in pools
 Are twinkling in the road,
 And comes a wind of frost that cools—
 A song, and the last load—
 From garnered fields, from weeds that die—
 Good-by, good-by.

Ah me, the chill upon the heart,
 The hour that will not stay,
 When, sweetheart mine, we too must part
 Some day, alas, some day—
 When questioned Love can but reply,
 Good-by, good-by.

THE LIGHTWEIGHT SADDLE CLASS

A HORSE-SHOW ROMANCE

By Alfred Stoddart



THERE goes Stanley Harbison!" cried Mortimer Freeman. He was talking to Miss Beverly-Downs, and they were both viewing the Meadowthorpe Horse-Show from the top of the Halliday drag. "I see he has The Maid entered for the next class. I wonder if the old sore is healed?"

"What do you mean?" asked Miss Beverly-Downs, a little spasm of jealousy betraying itself in her face—for Stanley Harbison was the only man in Meadowthorpe whose admiration she desired, and perhaps the only one who did not freely offer it.

"Why, don't you know? Oh, I forgot you have only lived here a few months," replied Freeman. "Well, The Maid was Elsie Duval's favorite mount. She loved the horse dearly, almost as well as she loved—well, you know that she was engaged to Stanley?"

"I think I remember hearing something about it. But why was the engagement broken off?"

"No one ever quite knew, unless it was because the Duvals suddenly lost their money—dropped out of the life here completely, in fact, and went to the city. I hear that her father is a clerk now in a Wall Street broker's office."

"Still, Stanley Harbison hardly seems the sort of man to jilt a girl because she lost her money," hazarded Miss Beverly-Downs.

"Nor is he," cried Freeman, "but people said he was just the same. There was something else back of it all, you may be sure of that."

"But how did Stanley get her mare?"

"Bought her at the sale of the Duval stable nearly two years ago. They say The Maid has the best box-stall in Stanley's stables and that no one ever rides her but himself. Even he never rides her to hounds. She is scarcely up to his weight for cross-country work."

"So he is going to show her in the lightweight saddle class? You know I am trying for that ribbon with Dare-Devil."

"But you are certainly not going to ride him. Who is?"

"Wait and see," cried Miss Beverly-Downs triumphantly. Being not only pretty, but ridiculously wealthy besides, Miss Downs, though a newcomer to Meadowthorpe, was already an acknowledged belle, and was enjoying her vogue immensely.

"Wait and see who my rider is," she continued. "I promise you a surprise."

"By the way, here comes Harbison now," said Freeman.

Harbison climbed to the seat beside Miss Beverly-Downs on the drag.

"I have a surprise for you, Mr. Harbison," she said slyly. "You will never guess who is going to ride my horse, Dare-Devil, in the next class?"

"No; I think you told me you had engaged a professional."

"So I did—sent up to New York to Rickell's Riding-Academy for one, and whom do you suppose they sent down?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Miss Snow?" mentioning the name of a well-known professional.

"No."

"Who, then?"

Miss Beverly-Downs was watching him narrowly. She was anxious to see the effect upon him of her announcement.

"Miss Elsie Duval," she said.

Harbison's face did not betray his feelings. Indeed, it only indicated a degree of mild pleasure, much to Miss Downs's chagrin, although the effort cost him not a little.

"Indeed," he said. "We are old friends. Where is she? I should like to see her."

"She said she would ride the Devil straight over from the house, as she didn't care to see the other classes."

"The Devil has rather a bad reputation, hasn't he?" asked Harbison, a note of anxiety creeping into his voice.

"Between you and me," answered Miss Downs laughingly, "I wouldn't mount him myself for worlds. But he is a good-looking horse, and Miss Duval says she is not in the least afraid of him. By the way, won't it be odd—you and she riding in the same class? You are going to show your own horse, aren't you?"

"Yes," answered Harbison somewhat shortly, "and it is time for me to go and get the mare. Pray excuse me."

He went off somewhat stiffly, and Miss Beverly-Downs did not know whether to be amused or annoyed as she turned to reply to a remark of Mortimer Freeman's.

The Horse-Show at Meadowthorpe was the one event which brought all factions together—the hunting set, the polo players, those who merely rode or drove, those who did none of these things yet loved to

see good horses, and even those who did not care a rap for horses, good, bad, or indifferent, but who delighted in the pretty girls in their new hats and gowns.

The ring was pitched on the lawn of the country club, which lay in a natural amphitheatre formed by the surrounding hills. Of course, the women wore their brightest, newest gowns, but being summer these were chiefly simple affairs—at least, simple by comparison with the Madison Square toilets.

"There's your horse now," said Freeman as a handsome brown came into the ring. The animal seemed restive and nervous, but was admirably controlled by his rider.

"Do you think she is pretty?" asked Miss Downs, referring to the rider. It was the inevitable question which a woman will ask of the nearest male being when she is a little jealous.

"In a way, perhaps," diplomatically answered Freeman, who was not altogether undiplomatic. "Rather too severe in her style to suit me. I don't fancy horsey women."

Elsie Duval was indeed very different in type from the showy Miss Beverly-Downs. In her riding-habit, with her dark-brown hair drawn back smoothly, she was indeed rather prim in her style, but there was no suggestion of "horsiness," that unpleasant word, about her. She had brown eyes, a clear olive skin, and splendid teeth, which were often displayed in a very engaging smile.

When Harbison rode into the ring on The Maid, Elsie greeted him with a little bow. Harbison rode up to her and offered his hand, which she accepted gracefully.

"I am sorry you have to compete against the little mare," said Harbison. "I thought she was good enough to win, but I fear the Devil in your hands will be too many for us."

"Indeed," cried Elsie, "I'm afraid he has too much of the gentleman for whom he was named in him."

They were now walking slowly around the ring, but it required all Elsie's natural horsemanship to keep Dare-Devil down to this sedate gait, and she had to be constantly on the watch lest he should kick at one of the other horses.

Presently the word was given them to trot and then to canter. This suited Dare-Devil better, though only Elsie knew how often he would have bolted with her completely had she not firmly, though quietly, discouraged his efforts. Harbison's experienced eyes noted the strain she was under, although she concealed it so well that even the judges did not detect it.

In fact, Dare-Devil, with his showy conformation and brilliant style, was making a great impression upon them, and the blue ribbon now lay between the brown horse and Harbison's mount, The Maid.

The other horses were put aside while the judges carefully compared the action and manners of these two, compelling their riders to turn "figure eights" and to perform various other manœuvres.

Dare-Devil, who was well broken, in spite of his bad disposition, got through them very creditably, though Elsie was quite pale now with the effort of keeping him in hand. Harbison wondered what was passing through her mind, and felt that she must have been very much torn between the desire to see her old favorite win and her duty to her employer. He felt brutal in compelling her to lengthen her ordeal with the Devil, yet somehow wanted The Maid to win for her former owner's sake. The little bay mare's manners were almost perfection, and Harbison had only to sit her properly, which was no task for him, in order to show her to the best advantage.

At last Harbison noted with relief that the judges had come to a decision. They turned to enter the little stand erected for their comfort in the centre of the ring, but as they did so the restraint under which Dare-Devil had been kept proved too much for him. With a plunge, which Elsie, fatigued as she was, was now unable to withstand, he seized the bit in his teeth and bolted madly.

Before he had half completed a circuit of the ring a dozen grooms and attendants endeavored to grab his bridle, or by wildly waving their arms sought to disconcert him and throw him out of his gait. They only succeeded, however, in exciting the now frenzied animal still further. Harbison touched The Maid lightly with his heel and started in pursuit.

The little mare seemed almost to realize what was expected of her, and the crowd now awaited with bated breath the outcome of the strange race. Dare-Devil was very fast and was circling the large ring with all the speed he possessed. The little mare was creeping up to him, however, and Harbison now leaned forward ready to grasp the runaway's bridle-rein as soon as he could reach it.

Suddenly the brown horse swerved and galloped straight across the enclosure. With a thrill of horror Harbison saw instantly his intention—to leap the stiff five-barred gate leading out of the ring. The thought appalled him, suggesting instantly the danger of Elsie being crushed at a stable door or thrown on the hard turnpike road.

Before the people at the ringside knew what was taking place the big brown horse had flown the gate like a bird. Then a cheer went up as Harbison on the little bay mare followed after him with as much unconcern, apparently, as though he were riding to hounds or in a steeplechase.

Dare-Devil turned down the Meadowthorpe Pike, closely followed by The Maid, and then ensued such a race as Meadowthorpe had never witnessed before. "The Devil" ran as though his Satanic Majesty

himself sat in his namesake's saddle, and The Maid, speedy as she was, never laid her feet to the ground so rapidly before.

Slowly, however, she gained on the big brown, foot by foot—inch by inch it seemed to Harbison. And at last, just before they reached the railway crossing outside of Meadowthorpe Village, he seized the Devil's bridle and managed, with The Maid's assistance, to pull him down to a walk.

Harbison threw himself from the saddle, and as he did so Elsie Duval fell from Dare-Devil's back and into his arms, fainting from exhaustion.

A man ran up and took the horses, while Harbison half led, half carried, Elsie to the grassy bank which bordered the road. Upon this she sank, almost unconscious. Harbison was in dismay, not knowing what to do. He attempted to loosen the collar of her white shirt waist in order to permit her to breathe more easily. As he did so a little gold locket which she wore around her neck on a slender chain fell out. Harbison's face lighted up with surprise and delight.

Elsie, who was now rapidly recovering, blushed deeply and tried to replace it, but Harbison had seen it. That was enough for him.

"Why do you wear that?" he cried almost fiercely. But Elsie had no reply ready for him.

"Tell me!" he demanded, "why do you wear it—unless that letter of yours—unless it was not true that——"

Almost unconsciously Elsie shook her head, just a little. But Harbison's eager eyes read the truth from her eyes.

"It was not true! and you did care—you do care, Elsie!"

In another moment he would have taken her into his arms had not a glance from Elsie reminded him of the man holding the horses, who was now staring at them in an interested manner.

Some few minutes later they rode back slowly to the Horse-Show, Elsie mounted on her old favorite, "The Maid," and Harbison on "Dare-Devil."

"You must never ride such a brute again," said Harbison.

"I shall have The Maid now," answered Elsie in a happy voice.

As they neared the ringside, Bradbury, the M. F. H., who was one of the judges, hurried towards them. In his hand he bore the coveted blue rosette, which he straightway fastened on "The Maid's" headstall.

"The little mare earned it doubly," he said, "and it gives me all the more pleasure, Miss Duval, to award it now with you in her saddle—where you rightfully belong."

Bradbury's eyes twinkled, for he was by no means a fool, and there was something more than the usual warmth in the grasp of his hand when he congratulated Harbison.

Miss Beverly-Downs had been somewhat disturbed by the incident, but was reassured when she saw her horse safely returned and his rider uninjured. Perhaps she too saw that something had taken place besides the runaway. For there was a rather spiteful tinge in her voice as she turned to Mortimer Freeman.

"No, I am sure she is not pretty," she said. "In fact, I think she is plain. And they told me she was such a good rider."



THE TEMPLE IN THE FIELD

BY MILDRED I. McNEAL

HOW often, worshipping, have I
From toil, desire, and care
Gone far aloof,
Under the blue and solemn roof
Men call the sky.
The very air
Was sweet sometimes with promises,
And a divine content,
Passing from flower and field,
Taught me again to yield
My spirit, doubting, spent,
To Heaven's clear way, and try
The summons calling from I knew not where.

The rose, at coming of the sun,
Lifts an adoring face.
There is for her
No sharp distrust of time, no stir
Of joys soon done.
And shall the faith I praise
Be then a shadowy, fairy thing,
Spun of a wish? Much more
Am I than any rose.
For me there doth unclothe
A distant shining door,
Whereto my hopes may run
Past the last narrow bound of time and space.

THE DAY'S DISDAIN

By George Jones



I.

MORNING

HER mood changed in her sleep. The night before she had been angry, proud, resolute—triumphant almost, though it was a triumph the reverse of happy. She had done it. It would have had to be done sooner or later, and it was surely best to have done it at once, to face the final suffering now rather than to go on in a tormenting series of accommodations, reconciliations, hopes that revived of themselves, and beliefs that had to be fanned into life. There were things about which two people could disagree and yet be happy together—the big things, religion and all that. There were other things, the little things, that are so trivially yet everlastingly important, in regard to which a difference of opinion was hopeless. He evidently felt this himself, since he had accepted his dismissal without a word of protest. It was not like him to do so; it looked as if he had not cared—which, of course, was absurd. But whatever the reason for his silence, it was evident that she had been right and that their only course was to part.

That was her attitude of yesterday, of the past five days, ever since she had sent her letter. She had kept incessantly busy; had shown a surprising interest in a number of social and charitable activities that generally bored her to extinction; had talked and laughed; had even, in the opinion of some lookers-on, flirted a little; and at night had laid a confused and aching head on her pillow and fallen into strange depths of slumber. And now, through mazy lanes of dream-land, she was slowly returning to consciousness. In the earlier dreams, nearer the centre of sleep, it was as if nothing had happened. They were together, in a garden at first, where there was a large bluebird that talked, then in a strange house, with strange people all about, and she was saying to him: "Yes, I love you, but I should love you more if men were wearing neckties like that at the present day. You don't look like anybody else, and you don't even look like yourself." Then he began to look less and less like himself, till the idea of him faded away altogether. There was a little, fairy-like creature, in a costume of bright pink and yellow, that fascinated yet jarred upon her, who sat on the arm of the chair in her bedroom and would not move. Her father was there, but he could do nothing to help her.

Then she was asking the man at the farm (it was the farm to which they had driven together last week) if he had seen Mr. Woodbridge, and saying very politely, "Pray, do not disturb yourself; it is not of the slightest consequence, only I can't find him anywhere." And from then on she was alone, horribly alone. She awoke with a painful sense of something gone, and, unaccountably, with a tormenting little doubt—nay, a suspicion—lurking in the depths of her heart, a suspicion that in a world so sadly awry there might possibly have been a little grain of right even on his side.

She threw out her arms with a groan, striking her hand sharply against the wall, and opened her eyes. The white muslin curtains were patterned with iridescent bars of light slipping in between the slats of the closed blinds. It was dawn in the large shaded room and high morning outside. She often lay dreaming awake in that morning light, but now day, destroyer of illusions, had laid his hand upon her. She sat up in the white bed with tumbled brown hair waving about her face and dark eyes looking gloomily out to meet the worst. It was a horrible mess, and she should suffer from it forever (this forever presented itself to her imagination not vaguely, but in a series of definite dreary vistas); but there was one thing,—and her lips for being delicately curved were not at this moment less firm,—whatever happened, wherever their separate ways might lead, no mortal should ever know what it was that had divided them. He would never tell, and she,—not in her moments of expansion or misery would she whisper it, never in the decay of her second childhood would she relate to her grandchildren—no, of course, there wouldn't be any—to her grandnieces, not even in the hour of death, whenever she might die, would she let fall a syllable revealing to her nearest friend or relation what it was they had quarrelled about.

Seven o'clock struck. She sprang up, threw a wrapper about her, pushed open the blinds, and looked out on the east. The sun was already high. To the right the roses at the garden's edge were still wet; in front a slope of dewy lawn stretched away to a clump of maples and birches with shadows of warm violet under their silvery foliage; near them a little pond sparkled in the sun: the whole scene was made luminous by an adorable freshness.

The face at the window, in softness and purity of hue, in beauty of curve and of youth, gave back radiance for radiance. But there was no sunshine of joy upon it. Looking out on the familiar grace of the scene, Madeline almost marvelled that she had ever rejoiced in the beauty of the morning.

The day seemed to stretch out before her superb and pitiless. To live through all its long sunshine appeared almost impossible; it seemed not a moment, but a century of that dreaded forever. True, there might be a letter. He might remonstrate, supplicate a little;

he might answer proudly and coldly; he might write in anger. Anything would be better than silence. But, oh! to live till a letter came! and—if it should not come?

All through breakfast time, sitting opposite to her father, whose conversation was usually an affectionate response to her own brightness, and who, unchallenged by question or remark, forgot to rouse himself from business meditations, she was really talking to another figure, invisible, across the table, proving to the absent Woodbridge the enormity of his sins, the incompatibility of their respective temperaments, and the impossibility of any such relation as had been dreamed of between them. Usually, in such dialogues, the person attacked says very little: his wits hardly hold him together; but this time it was surprising what points Robert made. She had not realized before the injustice, the cruelty, of that letter she had written him; its phrases haunted her now and pleaded his cause.

Breakfast and household duties over (she was a notable little housekeeper), Madeline started for the post-office, a mile away. The road led past three or four summer places, through a little wood, and by fields and orchards. Erect and trim in her fresh summer dress, with a red parasol shading her face, she walked along the main street of the village, nodding to the passers-by or to the women of whose presence, at door or window, she seemed already aware before lifting her eyes. She exchanged repartees and weather-wisdom with the old men who sat daily on the benches at the post-office like appointed guardians of some public treasure. She received a number of letters, which she took from the hands of the curious post-mistress with smiling indifference, not even glancing at the handwriting till she was well along the street where it became again a country road. Then she drew her parasol down on her shoulders, curving one arm over the handle, and sorted the letters restlessly with both hands. They were all without interest. The sun grew warmer and the way home was hot and dusty. She was hurt for the first quarter of a mile, angry for the second, and in a state of burning disquietude and misery by the time she reached home.

II.

NOON

MADELINE had sent a message in the forenoon to put off a friend who was to drive over and lunch with her. She lunched alone, with a book propped open before her, its pages unturned, the food scarcely tasted. Then she felt the need of air, and, warm as it was save for a fresh western breeze, went out by the side-door into the garden. She walked down the path, hatless, with her head bent and red waves of sunshine in her brown hair. The masses of old-fashioned flowers, the newly opened roses, the little leaping ground-flame of nasturtiums,

scarlet and golden, found no way to her thought. But she was vaguely aware all the time of the mingled garden fragrance, and when, just before reaching the gate, she caught sight of the old bench under the tall group of lilac-bushes, the whole scene became suddenly visible to her, the bright flower-beds, the transparent insects moving up and down in the hot, mellow air, the shady corner beyond. And with it came another picture, almost as vivid, of the garden in springtime, the lilacs in bloom, the young green, the mossy walk, the rustic bench, and at one end of the bench the figure of a broad-shouldered young fellow, sitting straight and severe, opposite her own slender person drawn up in great dignity at the other end. That was the day of their first quarrel,—the mock quarrel, so it seemed now, not the real one,—and what a happy day it had been! Then there had been a sort of exquisite joy in disagreeing, in feeling that they could get far enough apart to disagree, and in knowing that, under all the contradiction, they were really all the time so closely bound together. Had it been an illusion, that knowledge? Or was it the sweetest and truest fact of life, and had she too easily lost sight of it? She sat down on the bench and clasped her hands over her eyes. That first quarrel had ended with two figures close together at one end of the bench. How could she have let him? No, on the contrary, how could she—— She started up, walked a little way, pulled a flower or two, hesitated, turned back, then turned again, and went into the house.

When she started again for the post-office, in all the noonday heat, it was with a letter held tightly in her hand, a letter that was almost hot to the touch, that would have disarmed pride, anger, silence itself. But she had taken care in the course of it to read him a lecture on the evils of quarrelling. He needed that—poor, dear Robert.

The mail was less bulky than in the morning, and again no letter. She did not post hers. Oh, the weariness and desolation of that walk home, with the fields stretching away under a dusty glare to the circling rim of blue hills, with the odors from the hayfields and the pines coming to her nostrils dusty but sweet, as sweet as if anything ever could be right in this life. "Nothing can be half as hateful as everything is," said Madeline to herself.

She had just returned home by way of the garden and was half-way up the stairs when she caught sight of a boy holding two horses before the front door. At the same moment the bell rang. She had forgotten her promise to ride with Harold Pemberton that afternoon. She flew noiselessly upstairs, let herself into a shaded guest-room, and hid there till through the slats of the blinds she saw two horses going down the driveway, Pemberton on the first, sawing its mouth and performing fierce feats of horsemanship, the boy on the second, sitting nonchalantly on the side-saddle, with a loose rein and an apparent inclination towards slumber.

When she had made that engagement the night before it was different. Things had not begun to come before her in this maddening perplexity of light and shade; they wore one fixed aspect. She was suffering, but she had to live and get over it, and Mr. Pemberton had a *raison d'être* as one of the tedious objects by which one was surrounded and on which one had to keep one's attention fixed in order not to think, or at least to look as if one didn't care. He had shown a tendency to be attentive all along; it had taken a little dexterity and assumption of ignorance to keep him from saying things that one didn't want him to say, and during the last four days the barrier had not stayed up quite as well. He was good-looking, well off, and considered very clever. He had distinguished himself at college; he published poetry and recited it unpublished—recited it even to a girl who told him frankly that she loved Shakespeare and liked Keats, but that she never could tell what modern poets were driving at, especially the unpublished ones. Thank goodness, the writing of poetry was beyond Robert!

III.

TWILIGHT

BEFORE starting for the third and last mail of the day, when the level shadows lay black on the golden green of the orchards, Madeline put on her prettiest dress. She had a letter with her, not the one she had carried at noon,—that was torn into little bits, then burned,—but a brief note, cool and ambiguous, not hinting that anybody cared, but leaving a tiny loophole, barely perceptible to an eye not wholly indifferent. Its more obvious purpose was a reminder that her letters had not yet been returned.

She glanced in at the grating of the post-office with a confident nod. The post-mistress shook her head with a look that seemed significant, and an empty box confirmed the report. Madeline stopped to read the headings of the newspapers and to hear the news of more fortunate people who had letters; an old woman whose son had neglected her was beamingly happy over hers. She walked with some acquaintances to the end of the village, then, parting from them, went on alone by a red glow of sunset, with threatening tears pent up behind her smarting eyes. She had posted the second letter and now wished from her heart that she had not. Of what use to try to bring back a happiness once flown? Love should be taken or left.

It was dusk as she drew near the garden gate, but even from a distance she could see that there was someone on the bench, a man's figure with one arm over the rustic framework, the head bent and partly hidden by the bushes. She stood still for an instant, a radiant after-glow in her face. It was just like Robert not to write, to come in spite of that most important business engagement, to seize the earliest op-

portunity to have it out with her face to face. How fortunate that she had put on that dress. She opened the gate, stole softly along the walk, and suddenly stopped again. The figure on the bench had revealed itself as that of Mr. Pemberton, bent, in the waning light, over the pages of a manuscript.

Someone stole noiselessly out of the gate, then rushed wildly along the road, taking the longest way to the house. It was dusk in the large eastern bedroom, and all the hues and shadows of the day, all the sunshine of her eighteen years, seemed to have melted into darkness for the girl prostrate on the bed. She knew by this time that all she wanted was Robert.

Her father's voice sounded at last in the hall below. Why was there no dinner? When was she coming down? What were those letters doing on the table? Should he send them up? Was there anything the matter?

No, there was nothing the matter—at least, it depended. The letters came up, and one was torn feverishly open and held out of the window to catch the last gray help of twilight. She cleared away a mist and read the first words. No, he would never comprehend her. He had never understood—he could never be made to understand—how she felt about things. She tore the letter in halves, then held the pieces against her cheek and brought them a little way round. He had the tactlessness to say, that hopeless, unimaginative, blundering Robert,—he actually had the temerity, the audacity, to say,—that it was all nonsense!



THE TWO GENERALS

BY SARA C. F. HALLOWELL

I.

ONE lies alone, in splendid state,
By the rive gauche of the Seine;
The other bade a nation wait
And hold his tomb half-dedicate
For the faithful wife, who comes,
With the rolling of the drums,
To rest by his side again.

II.

Under the dome of the Invalides,
Whose tattered flags tell many a deed,
The reverent throngs look down
On the Empire-Maker, whose high schemes
Have vanished into the land of dreams,
Leaving an empty crown!

III.

On Claremont's height, by the Riverside,
With reverent faith and martial pride
A nation keeps her ward;

Resolved the Captain's just desire,
Held steadfast through his pangs of fire,
Should have its high reward.

IV.

How sharply shines the Dazzling One
Who flung the name of Citizen,
And well-loved ties of plainer men,
Each for a stepping-stone,
The while he clutched the throat of conquered
France.
And yet the soldier Grant hath higher
place,—
His own majestic patience as a guide,—
With Bayard's chivalry and Sidney's grace,
Gentlest in triumph, savior of our pride,
Bidding his baffled countrymen: "Go back,
Resume your 'customed place, nor lack
The fruits of harvest time'!"

THE PRISON-HOUSE

By Algernon Boyesen



WILMERS leaned over the candelabra to light a cigar and then followed his wife into the library. A dignified elderly butler closed the dining-room doors behind them with the noiseless movements peculiar to well-trained domestics. On the oblong centre-table the yellow disk of light beneath the shaded lamp showed an opulence of gold and enamel knickknacks with here and there a silver-framed photograph of some lounging man or posturing woman, and hinted at massive, costly things in the remote, dim corners of the room.

Wilmers settled himself comfortably into a deep, leather-cushioned chair and sucked contentedly at his cigar, the purplish folds of flesh about his collar eloquent of the beatitude which a man enjoys only after an excellent dinner. To the intellectually inclined his air might have suggested a humiliating kinship between the psychic and the gastric.

Rhoda Wilmers leaned languidly against the mantelpiece and reflectively watched the yellow flames that darted and curled about the artificial logs like tiny golden serpents. She had rehearsed the scene a thousand times in heroic flights of fancy; in fancy had stood up before him and frankly told him that the dull, long prose of existence with him had become intolerable, that to-morrow she must leave him forever. But now that the momentous moment was at hand she hesitated. Now for the first time she realized that her action must always remain to him an enigma; explain it how she would, to him it must always seem a wanton cruelty, a desperate caprice. How could he understand the tremulous need for things of the soul she had struggled vainly to satisfy through all the vacant years, the passionate yearning to turn to some purpose a life pitifully empty of meaning and of hope?

It was not that words failed her. At the first lecture of St. John's she had ever attended—the reading of a pamphlet on “The New Ethics”—her ear had caught the rhetorical ring of his phrases, and as her intimacy with the young socialist grew she had learned to echo him glibly enough on occasion. He had but recently left her, and his fervid denunciation of marriage as “the basest of our social lies” still rang in her ears. Urging her bravely to break down the walls of the prison-house, to take up a golden life with him consecrated to the emancipa-

tion of her sex, he had reproached her with hesitancy; for his part, he scorned "the coward who sat on a dust-heap and dreamed of leaping into the clouds." His earnest young face aflush, he had swept aside her murmured reference to the world's judgments. Was not this act to be an inspired protest against the vulgar prejudices of the Philistine world? Eloquence was his gift, and for once duty and desire seemed to beckon in the same direction. Yet now the host of high-sounding terms that poured so convincingly from St. John's lips seemed suddenly robbed of their potency before this plain, kindly little man.

Though nerved to the plunge, it is human to welcome a plausible pretext of delay. She looked at him over her shoulder, searching his face for a saving hint of the heroic intention, for an intimation of a soul, fettered but aspiring, within the house of clay. Even in youth, when men are said to wear the fading traces of their celestial origin, Wilmers had not boasted the noble mould, and of late age, blurring the outline of his face and form, had made repulsive a figure that had been merely grotesque. Now, measuring his spiritual stature, she found it sadly wanting. A sudden consciousness that her action was inevitable swept over her like a wave and engulfed all other emotions. With a quick movement she turned from the fire and faced him. Wilmers had been idly watching the smoke-wreaths curl and writhe away into the shadows. He was not a divining man where women were concerned, yet something strange in her voice, a troubled intensity in her manner, brought him upright in his chair, apprehension in his face.

"Jim," she said,—"Jim, I have something to say to you——"

The gate once down, the words rushed forth and bore her swiftly along.

"To-morrow I am going away. You will not see me again. You have been very kind to me all these years I know, but a woman needs something more than kindness to fill her life. From the first I felt the need, and it has grown with the years. If we had had children, it might have been otherwise. I have always longed to do something, to give to my life some purpose. For years I have groped for it, and at last I have found it."

She ceased, her bosom heaving gently like a subsiding sea; paused, vaguely expectant of something from him. Picturing a scene, loud rage and invocation of the law, or mere awkward appeals to her pity, she had marshalled arguments to meet the one and had effectively steeled her heart against the other with St. John's ingenious aphorism: "A coward can bear a blow inflicted by another hand; one must be a hero not to flinch beneath the reflex of a blow inflicted by one's own."

To Wilmer it leapt, a bolt from a cloudless sky, and struck with the stunning force of the unexpected. Reviewing their life together, he tried to recall a single wish of hers that he had left unsatisfied, a

single extravagance that it had not been his pleasure to indulge. He had worshipped her loyally all these years in his awkward, unostentatious way; he had never imagined a life apart from her. And now a sudden cataclysm toppled his world about him in imminent ruin. Under the shock he sat blind and dumb, vacantly staring.

The silence stretched her tense nerves to the breaking point; desperately she went on:

"Henceforth my life shall be devoted to the emancipation of my sex. A valorous few must form the vanguard, break down the prison-wall, and lead the way. I must begin with my own emancipation. My life has been a cowardly acknowledgment of a social lie—a tacit denial of a woman's right to live. To-morrow I shall claim my freedom."

Wilmers, listening, but dimly discerned her drift. All that he held dearest in life was slipping from his nerveless grasp; that he knew. He rose to his feet and came towards her, his features twitching, his arms outstretched in a gesture of appeal.

"Rhoda," he said hoarsely, "for God's sake don't throw away your life for a lot of silly theories. We have been happy in our way. You must be ill, unstrung, mad."

"No," she said calmly, "only very sane."

"It's madness," he insisted, "rank madness. No woman in her right mind would throw away wealth, position, everything, and face the world alone, empty-handed, for no reason at all."

The phrase was unfortunate. "Wealth and position!" She took it up scornfully and tossed it back. "If these are everything, then we shall be poor indeed."

"We?" he interposed quickly,—*"we?"* He gripped her wrist and fixed her with an eye of steady flame. In spite of herself a hot wave of color swept from throat to brow.

"We," she repeated, meeting gaze with gaze,—*"we, St. John and I."*

We, illuminative monosyllable! After all, it was not a question of doctrine, of principle sublimely viewed; there was another man. He remembered being dragged to one of St. John's lectures, recalled with bitterness the fine lift of the chin, the resolute pose of the handsome head. He felt calmer now that this host of shadowy theories had resolved itself into a tangible foe.

"The situation becomes less perplexing," he said, a world of suppressed acrimony in his tone, "commonplace, in fact; you are bored, and you bolt with the usual young beggar with a handsome face."

Righteous indignation revived the dying color in her cheek.

"Our action is wholly free from the vulgarity you ascribe to it. It is a noble revolt against a monstrous etiquette, a protest against the

moral iniquity of marriage, against the physical enslavement of my sex. We are not influenced by personal motives!"

He fell into a chair, laughing hoarsely. "An ingenious protest! A handsome face is to chasten marriage of its iniquity!"

"No," she answered, emphasizing the word,—“no. You do not understand. To-morrow I shall go to St. John to live under his roof as his companion and fellow-worker. There is to be no empty ceremony."

As the idea came home to Wilmers his chest heaved, his features swelled with rising rage. "Good Lord," he cried, "you surely won't do anything so mad as that! It's been tried before and it isn't good enough!"

She answered, unmoved, coldly decisive: "We are quite determined in the stand we shall take. Where the cowardly draw back, we dare. We head the revolt and we accept the penalty."

"Listen to me." He spoke earnestly, the anger dying away in his voice. "I can't see you ruin yourself. If you can't live without this young scamp I'll give you your freedom and you can marry him decently."

"Still you do not understand," she said. "You urge on me the conventional cowardice; you would rob my act of its soul. Ours is to be a purely spiritual communion, a fearless union of predestined souls."

He threw back his head. "God! You can't be deceived by such rot! You can't be duped, like a green girl, by a vulgar fellow who sugars his low motives with a thin coating of ethics!"

Her spirit rose to arms in defence of the absent one.

"Before we go any further you must understand that I will listen to no abuse of St. John. When we have won our battle, when he has proved himself, then it will be time enough to pass judgment."

"Then," he gasped,—“then it will be too late. He will have dragged you through the mire."

She shuddered; his reference to the mud with which a conventional world bespatters the unconventional conjured up an unpleasant picture. Yet a sense of heroism buoyed her up; all women are potential martyrs.

"Jim," she said, almost pleadingly, "won't you try to understand? Our union is to be purely spiritual, a communion of mind, a marriage of souls, no more."

"I know my world," he observed brutally, "and men are men the world over."

A fine scorn burned in her eye. "There are men," she said, "who can understand a noble alliance between a man and a woman. Evidently things of the spirit pass your comprehension."

His ear caught the accent on the "your" and he winced, feeling the edge.

"And St. John," he cried passionately, "he, I suppose, is an adept in platonism. How do you judge between him and me? Have you put him to any test? Has he been with you when the lights were low, when the passion of the night burns in the blood? Has he leaned towards you as I do now and felt the air throb with the beating of your heart? You've exchanged notions on ethics in a crowded lecture-room and you judge him by that! If he were with you now, do you think he'd still prate of platonism? I'll wager not for long!"

She drew back, drawing her draperies away from his contaminating touch.

"For your own sake I wish I could prove to you the man's purity of purpose, his loftiness of soul!"

The thought came to him in a flash: here was his chance. "Prove it," he urged; "put him to a test. All I ask is a fair chance."

She raised her eyebrows in interrogation: "How?"

In the thronging thoughts of the moment's silence his devotion to her rose to heroic heights, topping mere egoism and personal vanity. Fear of the leering, hooting world faded from his mind; his one thought was to save her.

"Go to him now!" he cried breathlessly, "go to him to-night! Go to him as you are! Let him feel the mastery of your beauty, the power of your presence, and then——" The gap was eloquent beyond mere words.

For answer she turned and deliberately pressed the button summoning her maid. "He will not fail me," she said simply. The maid appeared and stood behind her mistress, discreetly inconspicuous.

In the doorway Mrs. Wilmers turned. "I am unafraid. Good-by." Her hand was outstretched, but he did not see it. He was leaning against the mantelpiece, his face in his hands, his shoulders heaving. "Go!" he cried, "go!"

He was aware of the swish of retreating garments brushing the stairs. "Go," he groaned, "go—go——"

A moment later the slam of the street door echoed through the house.

In the dim, high-ceilinged room Wilmers sat alone, sunk in the Morris chair, his chin on his crumpled shirt bosom, his arms hanging limp at his sides. Even the inanimate furnishings of the room seemed to ache with the pathos of irrevocable farewell; the empty chairs seemed to mourn a vanished inmate; the portières hung in funereal folds. In the guttering light of the lamp the room, for all its lavish decoration, looked desolate, blank, and bare. The Louis Quinze clock

which two gilt cupids forever bore on their uplifted palms struck twelve in persistent discord. Wilmers rose stiffly to his feet and ran his fingers through his thin hair.

His watery glance wandered aimlessly about the room and paused for a long moment at the doorway; it had but lately framed her figure. There was a slight rustle on the stairs; the portières opened and closed, and Rhoda stood before him, tall and white against their dark background. Her face was wan and old.

In the revulsion of emotions that swept over him his impulse was to catch her in his arms, to hold her close, to pour wild words of thankfulness into her ear. As it was, he went to her quickly and took both of her hands in his. "You are tired," he said gently. He felt the hands quiver in his.

She met his gaze sadly, a great wonder in her eyes. "You have nothing to ask?"

"No," he answered simply, "there is nothing to ask. I think we both understand."

He drew back the portières and she passed wearily upstairs.



ART

BY ALOYSIUS COLL

A STUPID worm, with universal scorn
 Impending every mention of her name,
 Obedient to the impulse of her lame
 Instinct, suspended from a sword of corn
 Her weight of ugliness; and from the torn
 Flat of the blade a coffin wove, wherein
 She hid herself in sleep. But through the thin
 Wall of her slumber-cell encroached the morn
 Of summer. Sun and motive of the world,
 Like master-artisans, within that house
 Patterned and painted, till the dry
 Promise of autumn, like a bud uncurled,
 Let all the glory of the seasons loose,
 And gave it wing—a gorgeous butterfly!

THE COOK AT CONLEY'S

By Karl Edwin Harriman



I.

"ALFRED!"

At mention of his name the man behind the newspaper made no response.

"Alfred!"

Mrs. Conley raised her voice.

The paper came crackling down as her startled husband muttered,

"Eh—oh—what's that, my dear?"

"Alfred, you must discharge the cook."

The paper, from dangling between Mr. Conley's knees, fell to the floor.

"Why, Isabel, I thought——" he began.

"So did I," was the quick response, and Mr. Conley imagined that he detected a quaver in his wife's voice.

"I thought she was going to be perfectly satisfactory—she began so well."

"Yes."

"But—but——"

"Yes, my dear." Mr. Conley had a vision in the instant before his wife continued—a vision of burnt chops and heavy, soggy toast, and eggs like china "nesters."

"To-day she bulldozed me shockingly."

Unquestionably now there was a quaver.

"What did she do?"

The note of angry decision in her husband's tone caused Mrs. Conley to lift her eyes quickly.

"I told her to make an omelet for luncheon—and—and—oh Alfred, she served a mackerel!"

"A mackerel!"

"A mackerel: she said she couldn't spend the time to prepare an omelet—an asparagus omelet it was to have been."

"What did you say to her?"

"Say! What *could* I say? I tried to speak, but choked, and she—she just gave me one look out of those beady eyes and her whole black face smirked."

"I see," observed Mr. Conley vaguely.

"And you must discharge her," Mrs. Conley added decisively.

"And she's only been here a week," her husband mused sadly, hopelessly.

"I know it, Alfred," was Mrs. Conley's faint-hearted reply. Then she brightened suddenly and, putting down her sewing, leaned forward. "Alfred," she said, "how would you like to board a while?—oh, only a few weeks," she made haste to add as she noted the frown pass across her lord and master's brow.

He shook his head.

"I'll discharge her," he said, and rose from his chair. "I'll discharge her." A moment later from where she sat Mrs. Conley heard him coiling the hose on the front porch, then his tread on the new cement walk at the side of the house.

Small wonder Mr. Conley was distressed. Just now he wished he had begun long years since practising firmness with Isabel. But meekly he had always succumbed to her pleading, given way before her least advance.

She had been bulldozed, eh? Well, so had he, and by cooks too, though to what extent Isabel little dreamed. She had formed the habit of locking herself in her room and screwing her fingers into her pretty ears—shells, Alfred once had called them—whenever, in obedience to her command, he undertook to discharge the cook. How many times had he been bulldozed by great, brazen creatures whom he would have enjoyed smiting? As many times as he had discharged cooks, and that was—"Let me see," mused Mr. Conley—"Aggie, Maude, Gretchen, Mary—no, there was one between Gretchen and Mary—Hulda—ah, yes, Hulda, with forearms like a blacksmith's." He had discharged *her* from the other side of the table. He remembered *that* well enough.

And now it was Carrie.

Mr. Conley smiled and stubbed his toe over the flange of the lowest step of the back porch.

Ah, well, it was only again, just again; but he was so tired of it all, so miserably tired. He grinned grewsomely, with a sort of Satanic pleasure, as he recalled the disappointment of a rich man who had offered a million dollars to a good cook and none had proved her worth.

He, offering a meagre four dollars a week, had met with the same chagrin.

It was Fate.

He seated himself on the narrow back porch and looked up at the stars, shining like splendid jewels on the black gown of night.

Presently he got up with a sigh, and his fingers closed upon the knob of the kitchen door.

The door was locked. To be sure, he might have known. It was one of Carrie's seven-nights-a-week out. Mechanically he ran his hand

along the sill of the pantry window. His fingers encountered the key, and at the cold touch of the steel a splendid idea occurred to Alfred Conley. He unlocked the door and from the kitchen called to his wife.

"Has Carrie got anything with her?" he asked.

"What do you mean?" Mrs. Conley called back from the living-room.

"A trunk or anything?"

"No—nothing but what she has on, dear. She said she'd try us a fortnight, and if she liked the place, she'd have her trunk sent out. Why?"

But Conley did not explain—then. He chuckled to himself instead. He locked the door from the inside, dropped the key, laughing, into his pocket, and joined his wife, whistling. Perhaps Fate had turned in his favor after all. He strutted.

II.

MRS. CONLEY was conscious that some time before she had dozily heard the clock strike two. She was fully awake now, and certain that some commotion below had awakened her. On her elbow, holding her breath, she listened. Ever since they had "built" in Hollowhurst—"streets paved and graded and forty minutes from town," the agent's prospectus had said—her constant fear had been of burglars.

At a repetition of the clamor that had awakened her she bent over the sleeping Conley and whispered raspingly, "Alfred!"

There was no response.

"Alfred!"

"Eh—oh—why don't you ante—what's that?"

Another commotion brought the master to a sitting posture, every muscle tense, every sense alert.

"It's burglars! Oh Alfred! why did we build way out here?"

And Mrs. Conley sank back on her pillow and began to sob spasmodically.

"Hush!" commanded her husband. "It's not burglars at all—it's Carrie."

"Carrie!"

"Yes, and if I'm not mistaken, she is desirous of gaining entrance to her erstwhile home. Burglars do not push a house off its foundation to get into the cellar. Listen to that! She is exceedingly eager."

The sarcasm of this speech calmed the fears of Mrs. Conley, and she was sufficiently reassured to follow her husband as far as the first landing as he went down stairs wrapped in a blue bathrobe decorated with yellow chrysanthemums, and in his noiseless bedroom slippers.

As he entered the refrigerator room another pound fell upon the

door in front of him and he chuckled, while Mrs. Conley, shivering on the first landing, held her breath.

"Hello!" called Conley. "Who's there?"

"It's jes' me, suh," came from the other side of the door.

"Who's me?" and Conley covered his mouth with his hand, as though he expected the black eyes of his caller of the night to pierce the door.

"Ah cain' fin' de key, suh," he heard.

"What key?" Conley asked curiously, drawing one foot up under his bathrobe.

"De key t' de do', suh."

"What do you want the key for?" was the master's severe query. And Mr. Conley realized that the situation was really worthy of modern French drama.

"Kase fo' t' git in, suh."

"What do you want to get in for?"

"W'y, kase I do, suh." Then the voice took on a certain richness, adding, "Stop yo' foolin', Mr. Conley, an' lemme in; I's mos' froze solid out heah."

"Who are you, anyway?" Mr. Conley *had* to chuckle then.

"W'y, you know who I is," came back through the door, "I's Carrie, Mr. Conley."

"Carrie?" the man in the bathrobe managed to say—"Carrie who?"

"W'y, you knows—Carrie, Mr. Conley, I wo'ks heah."

"You what?" this stentorian.

"I wo'ks heah."

"Oh, I see; you work here, eh? Now there seems to be a little mistake somewhere. You *did* work here, Carrie—*yesterday*; but just now—to-day—I don't think you do, Carrie. I guess you're a private in the army of the unemployed. So run along now, Carrie. Good-night and good-by."

There appeared to be an instant's hesitation on the part of the person through the door, then Mr. Conley heard footfalls on the steps. He darted into the pantry and from the window saw a squat figure moving hastily beneath a sputtering electric light; then it was swallowed by the blackness that enshrouded the "choice building lots" that clustered unbuilt and desolate thereabout.

III.

THE holy sun of a May morning was streaming in at the window. It was a beam that fell athwart Mr. Conley's face that awakened him. He arose and prepared his bath. Afterwards, while he dressed, hunger smote him full and involuntarily; as he tied his scarf, he chewed on nothing.

Time was when there had been a comfortable delight in the thought that a breakfast awaited him below in the sunny dining-room.

Where he stood, before his table, the sound of Mrs. Conley's regular breathing was borne to him.

He must prepare his own breakfast to-day. Well, he had done it before; he could do it again. He wondered if Isabel might not have been just a little too sensitive; if he might not have been just a little harsh. Carrie would be justified, he decided, now, in the light of day, in giving Isabel and himself a "bad character." Certainly she would. No one could blame her. And he *was* hungry.

He went downstairs noiselessly. Starving in the land of plenty! How insane it was, after all? And Carrie was human—no more, no less. He regretted—actually, keenly regretted—that he had not admitted her and apologized for having kept her waiting.

He went to the front window and stood there beside the palm pedestal looking out. He felt rather ashamed of himself. It was quite as though Day herself called "Shame!" at him and held up a chiding finger. He promised himself that somewhere, somehow, he would secure Carrie's address and seek her out—yes, even if it took all day—and make amends. How glad the day was, and how out of sorts with him in his misery.

"By Jove, I'm hungry!"

The words fell unbidden from his lips. The inner man it was that spoke.

Half turning, he gazed off down the street. In the distance he beheld a solitary squat figure. It drew nearer—nearer! It wore dresses! It was a woman! It was Carrie! Conley's heart leaped into his throat, but he swallowed it back and waited. No doubt she was passing only. He held his breath. She was going by—yes. No, she turned in!

As Conley flung open the door her finger was poised above the bell-button.

Carrie's black face broke like a night-sun into one all-suffusing smile.

Conley's emotion choked him, and he could only gurgle—"Carrie!"

"Yes, suh!" was the rich, mellifluous, tender reply. "It's Carrie; dat was a great joke you played on Carrie las' night, Mistah Conley."

All the strength oozed from Conley's finger-tips that instant and he leaned against the door.

Then his laugh rang out—awakening Isabel above—as, with robust-uous glee, he cried,—

"Oh—eh—oh, yes—joke—yes—couldn't resist—knew you wouldn't—ha, ha, ha,—great joke, wasn't it, Carrie?"

"It sho' was, Mistah Conley," was the reply as Carrie's squat figure lurched past into the kitchen.

Conley staggered into the parlor, and sinking limp and weak upon an ottoman clasped his hands as one in prayer.

"The fact is," Conley says in telling the story, "all that happened seven years ago. Carrie is with us yet, but whenever we get to thinking of that night Isabel and I both cry. I knew she was the jewel we had been in search of so long. A woman with as subtle a sense of humor as Carrie's can't help being an angel."



PARTNERSHIP

BY HAROLD MACGRATH

I ENTERED in a firm to-day,
The Mrs. Blank & Co.;
Mine is the work, mine is to pay,
For I'm the Co., you know.

But still I love the darling boss,
Whose eyes are brown and wine,
Whose charming dimples sink and toss
Whenever Mirth gives sign.

She bosses me around, I know;
But then, 'I love her voice.
Where she may lead, there shall I go—
Indeed, I have no choice!

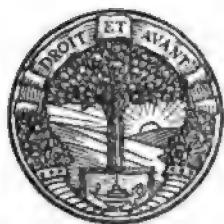
Long may the shingle hang outside,
And may the winds blow fair;
The contract reads, whate'er betide,
Together we shall share.

All thought of life round her revolves,
With her I shall not slip;
God send long years ere Death dissolves
This tender partnership!

A HOUSE DIVIDED

BY

ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT



PHILADELPHIA

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1903

**COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER, 1903



A HOUSE DIVIDED

BY ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT

Author of "An Ananias of Poketown," etc.

"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on; nor all thy Piety and Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it."

RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM.

I.

THE map of what our geography calls the Middle Atlantic States is surely not properly divided. New York, Pennsylvania, and the Virginias spread their ample proportions over almost its entire surface, while New Jersey and Maryland present but limited areas in comparison. There is also a very small peninsula called Delaware. New Castle County, with its rich pastures, prosperous farms, and miles of well-trimmed hedges, is a picture in itself. Then too there is the river;—sometimes intensely blue and rippling with turbulent, white-crested waves, at others colorless and smooth as a mirror; treacherous too, and capable of beating down its banks and inundating the surrounding country, should it desire to do so. And along the river are the marshes—salt marshes, you would be told, and therefore not unhealthy.

Not far inland is the Bear Station. I believe it is now a flourishing settlement, with houses, shops, a telegraph office, etc., but not so very long ago it was simply an old freight car, where hapless passengers waited until the uncertain accommodation trains thought fit to arrive.

One stormy September evening Mr. Barnett, the station master, sat in the freight car and waited impatiently for the evening train from Philadelphia, already much overdue. He occupied one of the

two wooden armchairs the place contained and remarked that he wished he had started a fire, just to make things seem more cheerful. His companion tilted the other chair as far back as possible against the dingy wall and replied that for his part he considered it extravagant to waste fuel by starting fires too soon. Silence ensued for a few minutes, while Mr. Barnett gently stroked his beard.

"Any of your folks been to town?" he ventured presently.

"No," was the laconic response.

"Expectin' company maybe?"

"Can't say that I am."

Clearly there was not much information to be extracted from that source, and conversation languished for a time.

"There she comes," said Mr. Barnett with evident relief, as he took his red lantern and hurried out to the platform.

The Bear Station was not popular, it seemed, for but one passenger alighted, looking disgustedly at the wet boards and turning up his coat collar as a slight protection against the driving rain.

"Was you expectin' to be met?" inquired Mr. Barnett, approaching from the rear.

"Yes," said the stranger, clutching wildly at his hat, with which the wind seemed inclined to take liberties; "that is, I—I hoped some one would be here. I scarcely know how to find my way, but perhaps you can direct me. My name is Bradley; I have come to teach the school at Red Lion for a time."

"Then," said Mr. Barnett fervently, "the Lord help you; you'll need help sure."

"I have the name of the place at which I am to board in my pocket," continued the young man, "if I could let go my hat long enough to get it."

"You might come inside," suggested Mr. Barnett doubtfully, adding as they entered, "the school-teacher most generally boards around among the folks, a while with each family; some of 'em likes it and some don't."

"This is the name," exclaimed the discouraged teacher, after looking through several letters, "Farnaby—Joseph Farnaby. I wonder where I can find him?"

"Reckon you won't have very fur to look," said Mr. Barnett after a moment's astonished silence, indicating with a wave of the lantern his companion of the early evening, who remained comfortably tilted back in his chair.

"Yes, that's me," he announced, rising and moving slowly towards the door. "Got a trunk?"

The stranger acknowledged that he had, and, having complied with a request to bear a hand in carrying it to the wagon, climbed into the

vehicle himself, and they drove off. Meanwhile Mr. Barnett stood open-mouthed in the door and watched them.

"Well, I'm blowed!" he ejaculated as he began to close up for the night. "Whatever's got into Joe Farnaby to make him board the teacher?"

"I wonder," he added, with a chuckle, as he started on his homeward walk,—*"I do wonder how the teacher's goin' to like stayin' in the Farnabys' house?"*

Mr. Farnaby and his guest drove on in silence. After plunging through the mud and rain for what seemed to the young man an interminable distance, they turned into a lane which appeared to lead nowhere in particular, but eventually brought them to a small house from the windows of which shone a faint gleam of light. Disregarding the house entirely, Mr. Farnaby drove directly into a barn, whose doors had evidently stood open for many months and were now entirely without hinges.

"When I put the horse away," said Mr. Farnaby, "we'll go into the house."

Richard Bradley waited in silence until the horse was fed and stabled for the night, then followed his guide from the disorderly barn across a still more untidy back yard towards what was evidently the kitchen.

"Come in," said Mr. Farnaby, opening the door and preceding his guest.

Somewhat blinded by the sudden flood of light, Richard stepped inside and closed the door. The room seemed full of people, and he waited a moment before advancing, hoping for an introduction.

"Josie," said his host, addressing a pretty, vivacious-looking girl who had risen at their entrance, "tell your mother I've brought the new teacher home."

"Mother," said Josie, turning to a little woman who had continued cooking something over the stove without in any way noticing their entrance, "father says he's brought home the new teacher."

"Tell your father," replied the small figure, "that it was just like him to do it and never say a word about it."

Pretty Josie shrugged her shoulders and exchanged a meaning glance with a clumsy boy of about sixteen. Then she turned to the stranger, who still stood uncomfortably by the door.

"Won't you come nearer the fire?" she said politely; "you must be cold and wet."

As escape from this eccentric household seemed impossible for the present, the unwelcome guest accepted her invitation.

"It's a queer thing," here ejaculated Farnaby, who had been look-

ing for something on the shelf,—“a *mighty* queer thing I never find my pipe where I left it.”

He went into the adjoining room as he spoke, slamming the door after him.

“When he comes back,” remarked Mrs. Farnaby to her daughter, “you can tell him his pipe’s on the table, where he left it this morning.”

“I trust, Mrs. Farnaby,” ventured Richard at this point,—“I trust my presence does not seriously inconvenience you. I will go away to-morrow, but for to-night——”

“Oh,” said Mrs. Farnaby ungraciously, “it’s not your presence,—that don’t matter one way or the other; you’re welcome to stay forever for all I care,—it’s *his* meanness in never saying a word. That’s what I can’t stand.”

Not feeling sure what reply would be appropriate, Richard took refuge in silence, while Mrs. Farnaby removed the ham she was frying and announced that supper was ready.

“Call your father, Anna,” she said as she listlessly seated herself, while Josie placed a chair for their guest.

Out of the shadow of a remote corner a girl advanced. With uncertain step she approached the centre of the room and paused a moment in the full glow of the lamplight. Her great, dark eyes looked directly at Richard with the pathetic blankness of the blind, while softly curling tendrils of hair seemed to form a halo around her face. Dexterously avoiding the hot stove, she passed through the door, closing it after her.

“Yes,” said Mrs. Farnaby as the girl disappeared, “she’s blind. Seems like a pity, don’t it, at her age?”

“It does indeed,” replied Richard gently. “Was she born so?”

“No,” said Mrs. Farnaby, “it’s his fault,” motioning towards her husband’s vacant place.

“Mother,” cried Josie indignantly, “how can you? Father gave Anna his gun to hold when she was a child,” she explained, turning to Richard, “and it exploded. She has been blind ever since, but it wasn’t his fault. I’m sure he cares more for her than——”

She checked herself abruptly.

“Well,” said her mother, “I don’t know what you call it. If he hadn’t forced her to hold the gun she’d never have been blind. He *made* her carry it because she was afraid. That’s Joe Farnaby all over. The child was afraid of a gun, so every time he used it she had to put it away; he made her do it once too often, though. Much good it does her now for him to be sorry; not that he says he’s sorry,—it’s not his way,—but he is just the same. And never a meal will he eat if Anna don’t tell him it’s ready.”

The return of Mr. Farnaby and his blind daughter checked any further revelations, and supper was eaten in silence. When the meal was finished Richard asked to be allowed to retire, pleading fatigue as an excuse for his early withdrawal from the family circle, none of whom, indeed, seemed to regret his departure.

As the only comfortable thing his room appeared to contain was a huge feather bed, he lost no time in depositing himself in its midst, where he busied himself with conjectures about the Farnaby household until he fell asleep, firmly resolving, however, to leave the place in the morning.

Down in the kitchen silence ensued for some minutes after Richard's departure. Mr. Farnaby smoked his pipe with apparent appreciation of its flavor, while his wife sat listlessly beside the fire with folded hands.

"Tell your mother," he said at last, addressing Josie, "that the teacher is going to board here."

Josie accordingly announced the fact to her mother, who might reasonably be supposed to have heard it for herself.

"Tell your father," she responded, "that I don't want him."

"I have brought him here, Anna," he continued, turning to his other daughter, who sat beside him, "because I need the money he will pay for his board, and I intend he shall remain. It does not matter whether he is wanted or not; he shall stay just as long as I see fit, and I wish to hear no more about it."

He rose as he spoke, and knocking the ashes out of his pipe laid it on the mantel, Mrs. Farnaby watching his every movement in a furtive manner. When he took up his hat she started involuntarily to her feet, clasping her hands nervously together. He looked steadily past her, and opening a closet door searched for something inside it.

"Josie," he remarked finally, "find my rubber coat for me."

"Anna," whispered Mrs. Farnaby as Josie disappeared into the depths of the closet, "ask him where he's going; I *must* know. I'll get the coat; I took it upstairs to mend."

She put her face close to her daughter's, clutching Anna's arm tightly.

"Ask him where he's going," she repeated, "but don't say I told you to do it or he won't answer. Pretend you want to know yourself. *Ask him!*"

"Father," said Anna, as she heard her mother leave the room, "mother has gone to get your coat. It was badly torn, you know, and she has mended it; it took her a long time, and she worked very hard over it."

He came and stood beside her, stroking her hair gently.

"It is raining," she continued, "and you must be so tired. Where

is it that you go almost every night? You never stay with me now in the evenings and talk to me as you used to do; I miss you so, father—you don't know how much. Where do you go?"

Mrs. Farnaby, returning with the coat, waited breathlessly for the reply.

"Josie," he said, "help me on with my coat."

Josie advanced obediently, but her mother motioned her aside, and, approaching her husband, held up the garment that he might easily slip his arms into the sleeves.

"Josie," he repeated, apparently unconscious of her presence, "help me on with my coat."

He buttoned it closely about him and stooped to kiss his blind child.

"Tell your mother, Anna," he remarked, "that I don't know when I will be home."

"Tell your father, Anna," said Mrs. Farnaby as she turned up the lamp, "that it don't matter to me when he comes home."

✱

II.

THE first rays of the rising sun shone through the curtainless windows of Richard Bradley's rooms and, falling directly across his eyes, wakened that young gentleman some hours before the day usually began for him. As he lay in that hazy and contented state of mind which precedes entire consciousness he began to wonder where he was and what he was doing there. These queries finally disposed of to his satisfaction, he decided that the first thing to do was to get up and determine his future course of action after breakfast, so he proceeded to make his toilet as well as he could with the very limited appliances at his command.

"It is fortunate," he reflected, "that I have no opposite neighbors, for circumstances are against pulling down the shade or closing the shutter."

He paused a moment by the window and looked out. There were, indeed, no opposite neighbors closer than New Jersey, but instead was the broad expanse of the river glistening in the sunshine, with an occasional white sail already in sight. The house seemed almost on a level with the water, but he realized that the land sloped gently into a marsh, and a dim recollection arose within him that he had heard somewhere of the reed-bird shooting on the Delaware marshes. Surely this house was admirably situated for such purposes.

"On second thoughts," he said, "I don't think I will look for another boarding-place just yet unless I find I have to."

After breakfast he asked to be directed to the school-house, and was informed that Josie was going to take the old gray mare to be

shod in Red Lion, and as it was directly on his way he might as well go along.

Evidently the mare was in no hurry to reach her destination, and they ambled along for a time in silence.

"Mr. Bradley," said Josie suddenly, "you must think us a very strange family."

"I was sorry," he replied, after a moment, "that I should have caused Mrs. Farnaby any inconvenience."

"She didn't mean to be rude to you—poor mother," said the girl, "she has a great deal to bear. As you probably noticed, she and father don't speak to each other; they haven't spoken, even once, for sixteen years; we don't know why."

"I should think," said Richard, "that they would forget sometimes."

"Not father," she said quickly; "he never forgets. I cannot understand it at all. Look at our house, it is almost tumbling down, and the barn even has to be propped up in places. The corn in that field is cut and shocked, but it will stand out there all winter. And we don't any of us dare to ask him why it is. When I can first remember there was not a better kept place in New Castle County than ours, and now look at it."

Her eyes filled with tears as she spoke, and she jerked the reins impatiently.

"It must be very hard for you," said Richard, somewhat embarrassed for an appropriate reply.

"It is," she returned. "Joe, my older brother, couldn't stand it and left home when he was twenty-one. He wanted mother to go with him, but she wouldn't."

"I suppose," said Richard, "she did not like to leave her children."

"No, it wasn't that—at least, I mean, not entirely. She would not leave father. Why, Mr. Bradley, she loves him after all; she watches for him when he is out, and never goes to sleep until he comes home, no matter how late it is. He goes somewhere nearly every night, but never tells her where he has been.

"This miserable life is killing her," continued Josie with a little quiver in her voice, "and there is nothing we can do—nothing at all."

"It is very sad, of course, but after a while things may come out all right," said Richard, uncomfortably conscious that he was indulging in a very commonplace attempt at consolation.

"Oh, no, they won't," she returned. "Anna once ventured to talk to father about it and beg him to forgive and forget whatever happened so long ago, but he said they had sworn never to speak to

each other again, and that an oath was an oath and should never be broken. It never will be, I am sure."

"You are named for your father, are you not?" inquired Richard. Josie laughed impatiently.

"Oh, yes," she said, "we're *all* named for him! First Joe; then I came, and they called me Josephine; then Anna—her name is Joanna, you know; then Josephus, the boy you saw last night. All named for him, and he don't care for any of us, except Anna."

"Could you tell me," said Richard, "where to look for a place to live? Of course, I cannot stay with you if your mother is unwilling to have me."

"I hope you won't go," said Josie earnestly, "it would make father so angry, as he brought you home. Of course, we are not very pleasant to live with,—I can understand that,—but we will try not to intrude our family troubles upon you. Indeed, it is a pleasure to see a strange face; we never go anywhere and we have no visitors, except one, perhaps."

Her face clouded as though from an unpleasant memory.

"I do not want to go, I assure you," he said courteously.

Josie's face was tinted like an apple-blossom, and her large blue eyes were shaded by long black lashes; she looked directly at her companion.

"Don't go," she said softly, "I—I wish you wouldn't."

Several days later Richard Bradley wrote the following letter, which was read with much interest by several of the gilded youth of New York:

"MY DEAR ORMSBY: I have not fallen by the wayside, neither have I tumbled off the earth together with the pins and dead donkeys, as you doubtless suppose; I am simply principal (and corps of assistants as well) of the district school at Red Lion, Delaware. Rather a lowly position for the valedictorian of his class, perhaps, but *que voulez vous?* I had to do something, and this was the only opportunity that offered, so I grasped it.

"Of course, you heard about our family row. I can imagine how its details have been gloated over by all the gossips in town. I don't regret my part in it, however, and would stand by Nell just the same if I had to do it over again; she had a perfect right to marry to please herself—which, by the way, she certainly did. It was a little hard on me, I think, to be cut off from the base of supplies so suddenly, and it's odd how many necessities there are in life, all demanding ready money; I don't think I ever quite realized it before. However, I doubt if the old man holds out longer than Christmas,—he must be very lonely without either of us,—and until then I shall get along all right.

"Red Lion consists of a church, a post-office, a blacksmith

shop, and two or three houses. You couldn't imagine anything more primitive if you tried. I have an idea that I shall be a howling success in teaching the young idea how to shoot just as soon as I get my cubs licked into shape (literally) a little more. I certainly shouldn't like a lifetime of it, but a few months is rather interesting.

"I am boarding with a jovial family, where my host and hostess have not exchanged a word for sixteen years. This family all speak grammatically (which is more than I can say for most of my new friends), but so far as I can find out they have no education whatever; I must confess they puzzle me. The two daughters of the house of Farnaby are more than merely pretty, and apparently quite refined. One of them is blind, and has, without exception, the loveliest and most spirituelle face I have ever seen; the other is charming also in a different way. I should judge they were about eighteen and nineteen years of age.

"The country is picturesque, and there are some fine old places near here. I do not imagine I shall meet the owners of them, however; they don't look as though they mingled socially with the district school-teacher.

"We rise very early at my abiding-place, and retire at a corresponding hour. No one talks in the evening, no one reads, no one does anything, and yet I am not bored at all so far. I wish you could come down for a while; I want to teach you how to shoot reed-birds; I want to show you the beauties of the landscape—and I want to show you Miss Josie Farnaby. Yours ever,

"DICK.

"P.S.—I brought my dress suit; I wonder why?"

III.

MR. SMITHERS, the Red Lion postmaster, was sorting and distributing the mail. This was a work of some time, not that the contents of the leather bag were so numerous, but because he was naturally deliberate in his movements and had to carefully scrutinize each letter as he drew it forth. Five or six men sat around on any convenient bag or barrel waiting for their mail and discussing the affairs of the nation generally.

"It stands to reason," remarked one, "that the country's jest goin' to the dogs. What else can it do with such men as John Green runnin' fur Sheriff?"

"Not to mention the Levy Court," added another.

"Oh, well," said a third, who sat upon the counter swinging his legs, "don't be hard on 'em. They ain't much, I know, but the Democratic party can't do no better."

"Sho, now!" said Mr. Smithers, who had just drawn a postal-card from the bag, "Bill Morris's daughter's baby has come down with cholery *and* fantum. Ain't that too bad?"

Very general sympathy was expressed for the unfortunate occurrence.

"Here's the third letter Tom Brown's had from Wilmington this week," continued the postmaster. "I do believe he's sold that sorrel colt at last."

"Then somebody's got took in mighty bad," remarked the gentleman on the counter. "A more vicious, ill-tempered brute I never seen; spavined too."

"Tom's lucky to git rid of him at any price," said the occupant of a comfortable seat on a keg of nails.

"Here's a letter with a black border fur old Mrs. Grimes," said Mr. Smithers, "postmarked Milford too. I'm kinder feared that sister o' hern must be dead."

Two square white envelopes were next produced.

"Mr. Richard Bradley, care Joseph Farnaby, Esq.," proclaimed Mr. Smithers. "That's the new teacher, ain't it? Only jest smell the one with sealin'-wax."

The letter was passed from hand to hand and eagerly sniffed at.

"Seems to favor white-rose cologne, don't it?" said one.

"No," said another, after a prolonged examination, "it's more sickish than white rose. Kinder like them tubyroses the wimmin's so fond of puttin' around at funerals, though why corpses should be supposed to be partial to 'em I don't know."

"He's been here now over three weeks," said Mr. Smithers, "and he ain't had no mail before. Wonder how he likes his boardin'-place, anyhow?"

"Well," said the man on the counter, slowly descending to the floor, "if you've got to the bottom of the bag and there ain't no mail fur me, I'll be off."

"Hold on," said Mr. Smithers, "here's somethin' else clean down in the corner. I nearly missed it."

He produced a small box, sealed with red wax.

"Registered, as I live!" he said excitedly, "and blamed if it ain't fur old Si Poole. Now what do you think of that?"

The box was passed around as the letter had been; it was shaken and otherwise carefully examined, but its contents were a mystery to all.

"Put it back," exclaimed a man who stood by the window; "be quick! he's comin'!"

The box was hastily dropped in its proper pigeon-hole, and the postmaster began sorting newspapers with a preoccupied air.

"Anything fur you, Mr. Poole?" he said in reply to the old man's inquiry; "why, I really don't remember; I'll look and see."

As Mr. Poole signed for his registered package and turned to depart the door opened to admit Joseph Farnaby.

"Ah, Mr. Farnaby," he said, "as you're going my way, perhaps you will be so kind as to give me a lift?"

He waited while Mr. Farnaby asked for his mail, receiving the two letters for Richard Bradley and a newspaper for himself, then followed him from the post-office and climbed after him into the dilapidated buggy. The loafers inside crowded about the window and watched them drive away. Mr. Smithers produced a plug of tobacco and, having first taken a bite himself, passed it around among his friends.

"There goes a worthy couple," he remarked as the vehicle slowly disappeared.

The two men drove on for a time in silence, but as they crossed the brook and began ascending the long hill Mr. Poole took the little box from his pocket and regarded it affectionately.

"It's a little bundle," he said, "a very little bundle to cost such a lot of money. You couldn't guess, now, what's in it."

"I'm not good at guessing," said Mr. Farnaby gruffly. "What if it did cost money? You can afford to get what you like."

The old man chuckled delightedly.

"So I can, friend Farnaby, so I can," he said. "I'm a rich man, ain't I? And getting richer every day, or, I should say, every night. Whatever I want I can get—*whatever I want!* That's so, ain't it?"

"What's the use in asking questions?" said Farnaby. "You know it's so. Why do you ask me about it?"

"Just because I like to hear you say it," replied the old man. "I'll tell you what's in this box, though. It's a ring. What do you say to that?"

"Well," said Mr. Farnaby, "I don't see what you want with rings at your time of life, but, of course, you have a right to get them."

"It's not for me," said Mr. Poole,—“oh, dear, no. It's for a much smaller, whiter hand than mine; such a pretty little hand it is. Why don't you have this buggy mended? It's not safe."

"I have no money, as you know."

"Too bad! too bad! And your house wants paint, your fences are tumbling down; even your barn has to be propped to keep it up. Such a pity! and the land is valuable too."

Mr. Farnaby touched up the horse somewhat smartly, but made no response.

"Why don't you ask me who the ring is for?" inquired the old man.

"Because," replied his companion, "I do not care. It is none of my business what you do with anything you buy."

"No," agreed Mr. Poole cheerfully, "that's quite true, friend

Farnaby. It's no affair of yours, of course, but I thought you might be interested because of your friendship for me, you know. However, I won't tell you about it until to-night; I suppose you'll be out, as usual?"

"Yes," said Farnaby moodily, "of course."

"We'll be alone to-night," resumed the other, "quite alone—just you and I. Such an interesting evening as we may have if things go my way, and I believe they will. I feel as though my lucky star will be in the ascendant."

"When were you anything but lucky? Sometimes I think it's true that the devil helps his own."

"Yes," said Mr. Poole, "so I believed, Joseph Farnaby, when you stole my promised wife; so I said as I watched the first years of your married life, and saw you apparently prosperous and happy."

"I thought the past was to be buried?" said Farnaby. "We have agreed to forget it if possible; at all events, not to refer to it. I am neither prosperous nor happy now; let that content you."

"Who is discontented?" demanded the old man briskly. "Not I, I assure you, and as for you—well, you made your bed yourself, you know."

"Let sleeping dogs lie still," returned the other; "what is done, is *done*! There is no altering the past."

"No," said Silas Poole slowly, "that is true. The past is irrevocable, but not therefore forgotten. I can be silent, as I have been for so many years, but my memory is good. Shall I tell you a few recollections of the past that come to me sometimes at night?"

"I do not care to hear them."

"I remember a boy growing up without home or family ties—a lonely boy, brought up by relations who did not want him. He had a sister, but he did not know her, for she also was reared by other relatives who did not want her. I remember a young fellow, eager and ambitious; working early and late, and little by little laying by the money he coveted, not for itself, but for what it rendered possible. He speculated and was fortunate, and after a long while he had enough; then he realized that his youth was about gone and he was still lonely. He wanted a home. Well, he had money now, so he bought one and sent for his sister to live with him. He wanted friends too, now that he had time to think about it, and he bought them also, although he did not realize it at the time. You were one of them. He brought you down here and gave you a start in life. Have you forgotten?"

"God knows," said Farnaby hoarsely, "I wish I had never seen you."

"I remember," continued the old man slowly, "a girl, with blue

eyes that laughed and fair hair which shone like gold in the sunshine, and how different the world seemed because she existed. For the first time in his life the man of whom we are speaking understood how it felt to be happy, for he was loved—or so he supposed. At that time he knew but little of women, so he believed in them. He felt that he was unworthy of her, that his grave middle age was unsuitable to her youth, but he meant to make her happy. I think he could have done it."

He paused for a moment and returned the salutation of a passing acquaintance.

"He brought you, Joseph Farnaby, and introduced you to this girl, because he wanted his wife and friend to know and like each other; he was glad they seemed so congenial, for your home was near theirs. He thought you would marry soon; he hoped you might fancy his sister."

The wheels of the buggy creaked dismally as they slowly toiled up the hill.

"I remember also," resumed the old man after a long pause, "the note she wrote him saying that when he received it she would be married to his friend, and begging his forgiveness for the way she had treated him. I can repeat it word for word. Shall I do so?"

His companion made a gesture of dissent, and endeavored to induce the old horse to quicken his pace.

"I have not forgotten the vow he made after he read that note," said Silas Poole; "it has been the one object of my life ever since. The tide was long in turning, Joseph Farnaby, but it's going out now for you, I think."

"While you were in your fool's paradise," he continued, dropping his metaphor suddenly, "I waited patiently, knowing the end must come some time. My sister married and went away, and afterwards, as you know, she died, so I have lived by myself all this time. For years I waited—long, lonely years, spent for the most part in companionship with my thoughts. I leave you to imagine what they were. Well, at last the day for which I watched is at hand; the end has come. You know the truth about your wife at last; how she——"

"Stop," cried Farnaby, "this shall not go on!"

"Oh, well," replied his companion, "as you please, of course. Curious thing memory is, though, isn't it? I wonder what started us to talk of old times?"

"You began it."

"So I did. However, we will change the subject now, as you don't appear to like it. Who is that crossing the field?"

"It's Josie," said Mr. Farnaby, looking in the direction indicated,—"Josie and Mr. Bradley."

"Bradley?" said the old man,—“Bradley? That's the new teacher, ain't it? He's here to teach, not to stroll around the country. Why isn't he doing it?”

“Saturday,” said Farnaby briefly.

“Oh, that's it, is it?” returned Mr. Poole, laying a detaining hand on the reins. “Well, you stop right here. We'll wait until they reach the road, then I'll get out and walk, and Mr. Bradley shall ride with you. It's a pity to have him get tired, and walking over fields is trying work to those who are not used to it.”

Joseph Farnaby regarded his companion morosely as they waited for the unconscious pair to approach.

“What is it to you,” he said finally, “whether Mr. Bradley walks or rides?”

“Nothing whatever,” was the brisk reply, “except that I want to walk with Josie—pretty Josie. She's your daughter, you know, and therefore I take an interest in her.”

“Mr. Bradley,” said Farnaby as his daughter and her escort reached the road, “here is some mail for you, and I'll give you a ride home; Mr. Poole prefers to walk.”

“But surely,” said Richard, hesitating, “if anyone rides, it should be Miss Farnaby. She has had a long walk and must be tired.”

“Get in,” said Farnaby grimly, “Josie would rather walk. Get in.”

Richard involuntarily obeyed the last command and stepped into the vehicle; as they drove off he found himself wondering why he had done so.

Left stranded in the road by this most sudden and undesired exchange of companions, Josie stood for a moment speechless, then started for home, saying as she did so:

“I should think, Mr. Poole, that at your age it would be wisest for you to ride as much as possible. You should spare yourself all you can, you know.”

“Stop a minute,” cried the old man, breathless with his endeavor to keep pace with her; “not so fast, my dear. I saw you coming and got out because I wanted to talk to you.”

“Then,” said Josie ungraciously, “you did a very silly thing, for I certainly don't want to talk to you.”

“See,” said he, placing a detaining hand on her shoulder,—“just see what I've got to show you.”

He drew the small box from his pocket as he spoke and began unwrapping it. Josie was a true daughter of Eve, and therefore curious. She leaned carelessly against the fence, watching the box emerge from its brown paper cover with interest.

“There,” said he triumphantly, as a small morocco case appeared, “now open it.”

She did so, disclosing a hoop of diamonds on a bed of purple velvet.

"Oh," said the girl softly, "how beautiful!"

She moved the case a little and the stones flashed in the sunlight.

"Try it on," he suggested; "see how it looks on your finger."

Josie had never before seen diamonds, and the temptation to look at them on her own hand was very great. She slipped the ring on her finger and held her hand in the sunshine, the old man watching her intently.

"It's pretty," he said, "isn't it? How well your hand looks with it on."

She moved her finger and the stones flashed again.

"What are you going to do with it?" she inquired.

"It's for a girl, Josie," he said eagerly,—“such a nice little girl that I am going to marry; she shall have that ring and other pretty things too, if she wishes, and she will be mistress of my house—my big house, Josie. Don't you envy her?"

"Not the house," said the girl, with a shiver; "it's damp and gloomy; I don't like it. I can imagine it in winter when the wind whistles through the cedars, and she sits alone in those great rooms—always alone, except for you. No, I don't like the house at all."

"But the ring," he said anxiously, "and the other beautiful things I can get for her. Silk dresses, Josie—think of it! and all the jewelry she wants. She is a lucky girl to have me ready and willing to do this for her, isn't she?"

Josie glanced again at the ring; her hand was in the shadow now, and the diamonds looked dull and cold. She suddenly understood the purport of the conversation, and the muscles of her throat contracted quickly.

"No, Mr. Poole," she said nervously, "I don't think she's lucky, and I don't envy her at all. I wouldn't be in her place for all the jewels in the world."

"Stop!" he said roughly, as she began to remove the ring, "stop! You don't know what you're saying. It's you I mean, Josie—you! I got that ring for you, and I'm going to marry you. I'm not so old as I look, and, after all, what does age matter? Better an old man's darling, you know. And I've always been popular with the girls; I know what they like, the pretty dears."

He came nearer and attempted to take her hand, but she jerked it impatiently away.

"I marry you!" she said with an incredulous laugh; "why, you must be joking; you're old enough to be my grandfather."

"She thinks she's teasing me," said the elderly Don Juan, addressing an inquisitive calf who poked its head over the fence at this inter-

esting moment. "She don't mean a word she says, and she's going to kiss me now, and thank me prettily for the ring."

He approached her again confidently, but Josie turned and fled, feeling sure that age and lack of breath would prevent her pursuit or capture. As she started she pulled the ring from her finger and threw it behind her; it fell in the dust at his feet.

IV.

INTO every girl's life comes, sooner or later, an awakening; she realizes that she was created to be loved and to love in return, and she accepts the situation quietly. There are women who confidently assert that the definition of love is happiness, but there are others who say it is suffering.

It is the latter who look pitifully at the girl just waking, wondering how soon the soft gladness shining in her eyes will disappear. They have not forgotten that they, themselves, once believed life a duet of pleasure, with long days full of sunshine; they remember also the nights which followed those days—endless nights, filled with anguish and regret. They feel once more the scalding tears which washed the gladness from their eyes and the bloom from their cheeks, and they pray she may be spared such nights.

To every man comes, at one time or another, a consciousness of power, which clothes him as a garment. He puts it on, perhaps, with his first long trousers, and continues to wear it while he lives. It is sometimes deeply shrouded in a cloak of humility, but it is never really forgotten; and the knowledge of this power must be very stimulating at times.

"Let me carry the basket," said Richard, "it is too heavy for you."

Josie willingly relinquished it, remarking:

"I did not know I had so many. Mother was making apple jelly, and I went out to pick up some more apples for her."

"I feel that I must apologize," said he after a moment, "for leaving you as I did this morning. I really do not know why I went, except that your father spoke in a very peremptory manner."

Josie frowned suddenly.

"Yes," she said, "it wasn't nice in you to leave me with that horrid old man."

"I did not want to go," he said quickly; "surely you don't think that?"

"Oh, I don't know, I'm sure," she replied carelessly.

Richard set the basket on the ground and faced her determinedly.

"Now," he said, "let us argue the question. You know in your heart I did not want to leave you, don't you?"

She picked a piece of golden-rod and fastened it in her dress, arranging it with great care.

"Don't you know it?" he persisted,—"don't you?"

Josie turned slowly aside, while the soft color in her cheeks deepened until a rosy flush overspread her entire face.

"Yes," she whispered, "I do know it."

"And now," he said, "you must give me that bit of golden-rod you are wearing. No, not that way; fasten it in my coat."

He stooped a little as she placed the flower in his button-hole.

"There," she said, looking up at him laughingly, "I forgive you for leaving me."

The gray eyes gazing down into the blue flashed suddenly; perhaps they read something there which pleased them. He took her hand in both of his and drew her gently towards him.

"I wish I might never leave you," he whispered.

"Josie," called Mrs. Farnaby at this point, "are you never coming with those apples?"

Thus rudely brought back to earth, Josie picked up her basket and started for the house, while Richard stood and looked after her retreating figure. He then took his handkerchief and mopped his brow thoroughly.

"If she had looked at me like that another minute," he reflected, "I wonder what I would have said or done?"

The boy who develops into a man without having run the gamut of emotions inspired by varying phases of the tender passion is rare indeed. Such boys do not, as a rule, make the most interesting men, although they doubtless lead very equitable lives.

Richard Bradley had been through many affairs of his own already; he could look back to the time when, as a small boy in knickerbockers, he had lost his heart to the flaxen pigtailed and rosy cheeks of the little girl across the way. He had, indeed, found it difficult to retain entire possession of that useful appendage since those early days. To be sure, it had often been returned to him, unharmed and quite as good as new, but he always generously bestowed it elsewhere as soon as possible. Very recently he had received it back from the young lady who stood third from the end in the chorus at the Gayety Theatre, and upon examination had found it uncracked, but a little shopworn, whereupon he resolved to keep it for his own exclusive use for a while at least. Now it was going again; he knew the symptoms well and felt them coming on.

"I will go down to the river," he said to himself, "and think it over. Perhaps I had better go home."

As he crossed the yard he encountered Anna Farnaby, leaning listlessly against the fence, and stopped to speak to her.

"I knew it was you," she said, "by your footstep."

"What sharp ears you have," he returned pleasantly.

"One should have quick ears when they must be eyes as well," she said quietly.

Something in her voice touched the young fellow, for she seldom referred to her affliction, but bore it patiently and cheerfully.

"What were you doing out here," he said, "all by yourself?"

"I was waiting for father," she replied; "I thought perhaps he would take me to the river,—he sometimes does,—and I am so tired of this yard. I know every inch of the fence and every piece of lichen on the trees as high as I can reach."

"Come with me," suggested Richard kindly; "I was going to the river when I met you."

The girl hesitated.

"I am afraid it is rather late," she said; "it is a long lane, you know, and I must be home in time to call father to his supper."

"But I know a short cut across the marsh," he insisted; "there is a good path and I can take you quite safely. Are you afraid to trust yourself to me?"

"Oh, no," she said quickly, "not at all afraid. I will come gladly."

She gave him her hand as she spoke, and he guided her through a gap in the fence and across the next field in silence.

"You have been very kind to me, Mr. Bradley," she said at last; "I don't know how to thank you."

"Do not try," he said gently, "I have done nothing at all."

"Do you call it nothing to read to me so often," said the blind girl, "and to explain passages that I cannot understand? The books you have read me have opened new worlds; they have given me something to think about besides myself and our misfortunes. Do you call that nothing?"

"I am very glad you like them," he replied; "it is a pleasure to me, I assure you, if I can in any way add to your happiness. Now, here is a ditch we must cross; it is rather broad, but there is a very strong, wide plank, so you need not be afraid. Give me both your hands and trust me not to let you slip. Are you ready? I will walk backward and hold on to you carefully."

"I know this ditch," said the girl as they reached the other side; "it is deep enough for father to keep his boat here for duck-shooting; and I know the path too, I think; it leads to old Mr. Poole's house, doesn't it?"

"I believe so. Now, a little pull up the bank, and here is the river. Let us sit down on this log and rest a while."

"Describe the river; how does it look this afternoon?"

"Very broad," he said, "very smooth and colorless. There is not even a ripple, and the sails are reflected as though it were a mirror."

"That means a storm," she said uneasily, "and the bank is weak—father said so. If it is not mended, the marsh will be flooded."

"How well you know your river," he said, smiling.

"I love it," she returned earnestly. "Whenever I can I come here, for it seems to call me. At night, when all is still, I can sometimes hear the waves lapping against the bank, and they often put me to sleep when I am wakeful. And yet," she added with a shiver, "I think I am a little afraid of it."

"It is a fine sheet of water," he said. "I am growing fond of it myself, I believe, although I have only been here a month; and yet, do you know, I was considering leaving it."

"You are going away?" she said blankly.

"I had a letter from my sister this morning," he resumed; "she thinks I should go home to my father; he is an old man, and she says he is lonely and needs me. We had a difference of opinion before I left, you know; that is the reason I came here."

"When do you go?"

"Why," he replied, tracing a word in the sand with a bit of stick, "I am not so sure that I shall go just yet. Something keeps me here."

"What," she said eagerly,— "what keeps you?"

"A girl's face," he answered as he added the final letter to the word "Josie" and threw the stick into the river.

"It must be a very pretty face," said the blind girl wistfully.

"It is," he replied, "quite the prettiest I have ever seen."

"Will you describe it to me."

"Imagine a wild rose," he said, "just opening, or the first bit of arbutus found on the sunny side of a hill in the early spring."

She looked directly at him, her great brown eyes dilating as though endeavoring to read his thoughts.

"Her name," she said,— "what is her name?"

"Oh," he replied, laughing a little, "I cannot tell you that just yet, though perhaps I may some time. I should think, though," he added after a moment, "that you might have guessed it."

She leaned forward, putting her hand on his arm.

"Her hair and eyes," she said breathlessly, "what color are they?"

"Her hair," said Richard with a second sudden burst of eloquence, "has caught the sunshine and imprisoned it, and her eyes are as blue as the sky."

The girl turned quickly towards the river, shivering slightly, as though the breeze had chilled her.

"What a lot of nonsense you have made me talk!" he exclaimed,

laughing uneasily; "forget all about it, please. Shall we finish our book this evening?"

"Let us go home," she said, rising slowly, "I am cold and tired. I think the sun has set."

That night Josie Farnaby found it impossible to sleep, so, creeping carefully out of bed that she might not disturb her sister, she went to the window and knelt before it, looking out on the fields, which showed white in the moonlight, and now and then pressing her hand to her hot cheeks. A sudden movement from the bed startled her.

"Anna," she whispered, "are you awake?"

"Yes," was the reply. "Where are you, Josie? Is anything the matter? Are you not well?"

"Yes," said Josie, "quite well, but restless; I could not sleep, so I got up and came to the window. I feel so happy to-night, Anna."

"Why to-night especially?"

"I don't know. At least I'm—not quite sure. Everything looks so beautiful outside, Anna. The moon shines full on the river until there is a path of gold across it. I can see the Jersey shore distinctly; even the trees look as I never saw them before, and the fields are flooded with light. How I wish you could see it too."

"Yes," said the blind girl with a quick sob, "it's all dark to me, Josie—very, very dark."

V.

THE moon which shone so brilliantly into Josie Farnaby's little room also struggled bravely to penetrate the thick branches of the evergreens which surrounded Silas Poole's dwelling, but merely succeeded in throwing a few feeble gleams of light, making the shadows seem all the larger and darker by contrast.

At a small table drawn up in front of the fireplace two men sat playing cards. In silence so intense that it could be felt they shuffled, dealt, and went on with the game, each considering his cards carefully before playing and furtively watching his opponent, as though distrustful of him. A decanter and some glasses were near at hand, while a kerosene lamp diffused light and odor impartially.

"Mine," cried Silas Poole exultantly as the last card fell,—
"mine!"

"It was a fair game," he continued, gathering in the chips with trembling fingers; "you had as good a chance as I, but you lost—you lost."

"Yes, I lost," said the other slowly; "it was the house this time and I lost; there is nothing left."

Mr. Poole rose and went to a desk on the other side of the room, from the drawer of which he produced several bits of paper.

"See," he said, returning to the table, "here are your notes; I've kept them carefully and they date back to the night we began to play. First the marsh, you know; then the other fields, one by one; then the stock and barn; and now the house—all mine."

"Now the house," repeated Farnaby mechanically,—"*all yours.*"

"But the mortgage,—we almost forgot that; the mortgage I took to oblige you before we played our first game that night; you could not pay the interest, you remember,—how is that to be arranged? I seem to hold a mortgage on my own land. What are we to do about that?"

"I do not know," replied the unhappy man; "you cannot draw blood from a stone. I have no money; I have nothing that I can call my own after to-night."

"Yes, you have," cried the other excitedly; "that's just what I was coming to. You have something you call your own, but which I want to call *my* own. I can claim anything of yours in payment of a just debt, can't I?"

"I have no more property, you know that. What is it you want?"

"I want your daughter," said the old man quietly; "I mean to marry her."

They looked at each other in silence.

"Which daughter?" asked Farnaby at last.

"Which daughter!" repeated the other; "only hear him, *which* daughter! What should I want with a blind girl when I need someone to look after me? It's Josie I mean; pretty Josie, the image of her mother at her age; the time she used to go down the lane to meet——"

Farnaby struck the table heavily with his clinched fist.

"Stop," he cried, "none of that!"

An adventurous moth hovered too close over the lamp and was drawn down the chimney to its fate, causing the light to flicker suddenly. A mouse peeped out of the wainscoting and, finding itself unnoticed, ventured to scamper across the floor, its small feet making a scratching sound on the bare boards.

"Come," said Silas Poole at last, "no one shall say I'm not generous. I'll give you another chance; we will play again. If I win, I marry Josie and burn those bits of paper; if you win, I lose all, for I will stake everything I have ever gained from you, and you shall burn the notes and keep your daughter also. In either case you stand to win; it's not every man who would give you such a chance. Do you agree?"

The mouse had reached its destination and begun to gnaw a hole for itself.

"After all," he resumed, "what am I asking you to do? I can

give the girl a good home, which is more than she has at present, you know, and at my death she will be a rich woman. It's a chance most girls would jump at.

"If you do not agree," he continued, leaning forward that he might closely observe his companion,—"*if you do not agree*, Joseph Farnaby, then I take entire possession of everything, and you and your family may starve for all I care. The house and barn are not worth repairing; I shall pull them down, I think, and sell the land. The stock and furniture shall be sold by the sheriff, and the proceeds come to me. Where will you go—you and your wife, whom you don't speak to, and your daughter, blind through your fault? What will you do with them this winter?"

The clock on the mantel ticked loudly and monotonously on.

"Do you agree?" he persisted.

Joseph Farnaby suddenly rose to his feet and stood towering above the shrunken figure beside him.

"No!" he cried, starting for the door, "I'm damned if I do!"

Once outside in the frosty October air he mechanically turned in the direction of his home. Walking along the familiar path across the field his mind seemed a blank. He was conscious of no sensations whatever, but went steadily forward until he reached the river bank, where he stumbled over a log, upon which he sat down and gazed out upon the Delaware quivering and sparkling in the moonlight. It was the same log on which Richard Bradley and Anna had sat some hours earlier.

Mankind is capable of a large amount of endurance. Up to a certain point each succeeding affliction or misfortune makes a new wound, and in so doing causes the old ones to bleed afresh. After this point is reached, however, one's senses mercifully become numbed and, for a time at least, incapable of realizing anything more.

As he sat motionless Joseph Farnaby became aware of something bright in the sand at his feet which glittered in the moonlight, and he stooped to pick it up. It proved to be a small gold pin he had once given his daughter Anna and which she wore constantly. So Anna had been down by the river. The pin lay in the palm of his hand and he looked at it vaguely, wondering what she was doing there. As he gazed at the small, inanimate object, so full of the personality of its owner, his faculties began to awaken, and out of the chaos of his mind evolved a thought which finally became painfully distinct. What was it Silas Poole had said? Gradually the words returned to him, and he repeated them slowly.

"Your wife, whom you don't speak to, and your daughter, blind through your fault. What will you do with them this winter?"

What could he do with them? What could he? He turned and

looked behind him; brown in the flood of white light stood the little house, a poor enough place, perhaps, but a shelter, at all events. On each side sloped fields whose every foot of ground he knew and loved. He moved his hand, and the pin caught the moonlight again. Anna—what was to become of her? Where should he take her? Joseph Farnaby's love for his blind child was the loadstar of his existence. She was both his pleasure and a constant pricking of the thorn in the flesh, for he never forgot that he alone was responsible for her affliction. He had sworn that no matter what happened, she should be provided for and shielded in some manner, and now what was to become of her?

He wiped the drops of perspiration from his brow and looked once more at the house and farm. It could all be his again if he chose, and, after all, why not? Why should he have hesitated for a moment? If he won,—and he had a chance,—everything would adjust itself satisfactorily. If he lost,—well, it was a question of Josie's happiness, merely, against the welfare of the rest of the family. Josie's happiness or Anna's safety? There was no longer any doubt in his mind as to what course to pursue. When his daughters were weighed in the scale of his affection the balance was largely in favor of the younger girl. He would provide for both if he could; if not, Anna, his afflicted child, must be cared for and sheltered at all hazards.

He looked out over the shining expanse of the river. Josie's face was persistently before him, radiant with its new gladness, the cause of which he had begun to suspect, and Josie's eyes looked reproachfully at him as her mother's had looked once long ago. He thought of the house he had lately left and its master; he also remembered vaguely the fable of the spider and the fly. What sort of a life would she have with Silas Poole? What sort of a life?

The little pin again flashed suddenly as he moved his hand. Springing to his feet, he bared his head, raising his hand above him.

"O God," he cried, "if there is a God, send me luck to-night."

Only the waves of the Delaware broke the silence that followed as they lapped gently against the bank.

"Send me luck to-night," he repeated, "send me luck to-night."

Putting the pin carefully in his pocket, he turned and retraced his steps, walking swiftly until he arrived at the house he had lately quitted, which looked grim and inhospitable enough in the dense shade of the evergreens. Without knocking he opened the door and entered the room. The old man still sat beside the table, as he had done an hour previous.

"So," he said, "you have thought better of it."

"Yes," said Farnaby, "I agree. I have come to play."

"Before we begin," said the other, "there are a few things I should like to say.

"Your daughter," he resumed, motioning towards a chair, "does not look favorably upon me, strange to say. Only to-day I broached the matter to her and showed her the ring I got this morning, but she took to her heels and literally ran away from me; the ring I had bought she threw into the dirt. How do I know she will consent to the marriage?"

Joseph Farnaby's lower jaw slowly settled into an expression well known in his family circle.

"If I say so," he replied, "she will consent."

"Good; your powers of persuasion must be very great. Those bits of paper I spoke of are not destroyed, of course, until after the ceremony."

"You may not win."

"That is true," said Mr. Poole, "quite true, but this is my lucky night, I think. Shall we begin?"

"Not cards," said Farnaby quickly as his companion began to shuffle, "I have no luck with cards to-night. You have dice; let us throw and get it over. The best three out of five."

"No," said the old man, "the best two out of three."

He produced the dice as he spoke and handed them to his opponent, who threw a four and a deuce; Mr. Poole followed with an ace and a tray, while Farnaby threw double aces, and his companion double trays; with hands that trembled slightly Joseph Farnaby shook the box and threw, disclosing a four and a deuce; sure of his victory, Mr. Poole uncovered a five and an ace. Both men breathed quickly as they leaned over the table while Farnaby threw a five and a six. Silas Poole lifted his box from the dice and disclosed double sixes.

Rising, he went to the decanter and poured some whiskey into the glasses.

"Drink," he cried, thrusting the glass into his companion's hand,—"drink to the bride."

VI.

It is curious to observe the unreality of commonplace things when one again takes up one's life after passing through a crisis of vital importance. It seems as though the universe should be altered in some way, and one is vaguely surprised that the sun shines as usual and the daily duties stand waiting to be performed, unchanged from yesterday.

Joseph Farnaby went mechanically about the routine work of the farm on the day following the events described in the preceding chapter, pausing often, indeed, and occasionally lapsing into periods of abstraction which lasted a long time.

The day wore slowly away, and as evening approached he stood at the gate of the barnyard and looked towards the house. Mrs. Far-

naby and Anna sat on the doorstep facing him, while Josie and Richard Bradley strolled slowly down the lane, apparently oblivious of everything but each other. His face darkened as he watched them disappear, and he turned again towards his wife and child on the doorstep.

"It has to be done," he said aloud; "they must know it some time, and I have got to tell them."

He laid his hand affectionately against the old gate, and lifted it up on its broken hinges.

"I will mend it to-morrow," he thought.

Fields sloped away to the river, and pastures stretched out before him rich in promises for the ensuing year.

"It will all be mine again," he said exultantly as he started for the house, "mine—all mine."

Mrs. Farnaby did not appear conscious of his approach, but Anna smiled and held out her hand.

"I knew your step, father," she said; "you are late in coming home this evening—too late for our walk, I'm afraid."

"Yes," he replied, "I forgot it. I am sorry, Anna."

Mrs. Farnaby rose and started into the house.

"Tell your mother, Anna," he said hastily, "to sit down again. I have something to say."

"Don't go, mother," said Anna gently, "father wants to talk to us."

Mrs. Farnaby resumed her seat, raising her faded eyes expectantly to her husband's face. He looked beyond her, as though unconscious of her presence, so she turned away towards the river, gazing vacantly out over its broad expanse.

"You know," he continued, addressing his daughter, "that I have been unfortunate and that I am deeply in debt. Little by little I have lost everything; even the house we live in belongs to Silas Poole."

Anna stroked his hand gently, while her mother made no sign of having heard or understood. He paused for a moment to note the effect of his words.

"Tell your mother," he said finally, "that I say we have lost everything. There is nothing left—nothing."

"Tell your father," said Mrs. Farnaby, without changing her position, "that I lost everything I cared for long ago."

"Last night, Anna," he resumed, "I went to Mr. Poole's; I often go there in the evening."

Mrs. Farnaby caught her breath quickly and seemed about to speak, but restrained herself with an effort.

"As I was saying," he continued, addressing his daughter, but watching his wife keenly meanwhile, "I went to Mr. Poole's. He told

me he intended to take possession at once; that he would sell the land and pull down the house and barn. I am powerless to oppose him, and if he should carry out his threat we shall be homeless."

"We will all be together, father," said Anna; "no matter what happens, we will not be separated."

"Tell your mother," he said distinctly, "that she may soon be homeless."

"Tell your father," said Mrs. Farnaby, without turning her head, "that I have not had a home for many years."

Silence ensued for a few minutes, while an enterprising hen escorted her brood through the yard towards the barn.

"But surely," ventured Anna at last, "Mr. Poole would not turn us out. What have we ever done to him that he should be so cruel?"

"Ah," said her father significantly, "what, indeed?"

A dull red spot shone in Mrs. Farnaby's pale cheek, but she continued to gaze stolidly out over the river.

"Mr. Poole, Anna," resumed Farnaby, "after telling me what he could and would do, all of which I knew before, proposed a very easy and simple way out of the difficulty. He is willing to destroy my notes and give me back my land on condition that Josie marries him."

Mrs. Farnaby started to her feet and stood looking at her husband incredulously.

"Tell your mother, Anna," he said, raising his voice and speaking very emphatically, "that Mr. Poole desires to marry Josie, and I have given my consent."

Mrs. Farnaby sank down on the step again, covering her face with her hands.

"The sins of the fathers," she whispered,—"the sins of the fathers—and of the *mothers*—shall be visited on the children."

"Does Josie know," inquired Anna, after a long pause, "and is she willing?"

"I have not told her yet," replied her father, "but it does not matter whether she is willing or not; she must do it."

"Ask your father, Anna," said Mrs. Farnaby with trembling lips, "if there is no other way?"

The river shone intensely blue, with white sails glistening in the afternoon sunshine. A dark line of smoke was plainly visible on the Jersey shore as an engine hurried along, dragging its loaded cars after it. Mrs. Farnaby raised her head and looked at her husband. She appeared to be trying to address him directly; twice she moistened her dry lips and seemed about to speak, but there was no answering gleam of recognition in the eyes which looked through her and beyond her, so she turned to her daughter.

"Tell your father," she said, "that this marriage shall not take place. I will not give my consent."

"Tell your mother, Anna," said Mr. Farnaby slowly, "that her consent is immaterial."

He walked away as he spoke to meet Josie and Richard Bradley, who were returning to the house. After a few words the young man raised his hat and left them. Mrs. Farnaby watched the little scene breathlessly.

"He is going to tell her now," she said; "it will break her heart; and I can do nothing—nothing. If I could only talk to him, only explain."

"Mother," said Anna, "why don't you go straight to father and talk to him yourself. I am sure he would listen to you."

"We swore," said Mrs. Farnaby dully, "sixteen years in November it is since we put our hands on the Bible and swore never to speak to each other again. Sixteen years, and we have never once exchanged a word; sixteen years——"

"I would break my oath," said Anna; "it is all wrong and it should be broken."

"You don't know your father as I do," said her mother; "many and many a time I've tried to speak to him and beg him to let bygones be bygones; often and often the words have trembled on my lips, but when he looks through me as though he didn't see me, as he did just now, I cannot make a sound, no matter how I try."

Anna sighed heavily. Things were very wrong indeed, it seemed, in her small world—quite beyond her power to remedy.

Mrs. Farnaby began to sob hopelessly.

"Think of my life," she said; "imagine what it has been. Think of Josie's life with that old man; think of her young life—ruined because of me."

"She has begun to love Mr. Bradley," continued the miserable woman, "I am sure of it; and she might be so happy, for he loves her, I think."

"Yes," said Anna, "I think so too, mother."

"Perhaps," suggested Anna hopefully, after a long silence, "perhaps Mr. Poole will not insist when he finds Josie loves someone else."

"For that very reason," replied her mother, "he will insist all the more."

"Anna," she continued in a whisper, glancing furtively about her as she spoke, "how did your father get so completely in this man's power? Do you know? He talks to you; did he never tell you about it? Are you sure you know nothing more than we heard just now?"

"Quite sure, mother."

Mrs. Farnaby rose and entered the house; in a little while she returned with a new light in her eyes and a flush on her cheek.

"Anna," she said, laying her hand on her daughter's shoulder and speaking very earnestly, "Josie's life must not be ruined. There is but one thing for her to do, and you and I must help her. She must run away."

VII.

THE congregation of the Red Lion church were about to give their minister the annual donation party. These parties were an established custom throughout the countryside, and being generally held in the autumn, were supposed to help that unfortunate man get through the winter comfortably, for his salary was, as a rule, totally inadequate to provide more than the barest necessities of life. As a matter of fact, however, experience had taught him to look forward to these occasions with anything but cheerful anticipations.

"If we come out as badly as we did last year in Glasgow," he remarked to his patient and long-suffering wife, "I'm sure I don't know what is to become of us. Will there be sufficient coffee to go around?"

Mrs. Strong was still young enough to extract some pleasure even from a donation party. At the mention of Glasgow she laughed hysterically.

"Oh, *do* you remember the Jones family," she said, "how it took Mr. and Mrs. Jones and six children to bring a pound of brown sugar?"

Mr. Strong assumed his ministerial expression.

"No doubt, Emma, it was all they could afford," he said gravely. "Let every man give as the Lord hath prospered him."

"The six children," she continued, without regarding the interruption, "immediately demanded bread and butter, leaving what they couldn't eat on the parlor carpet, and Mrs. Jones as she went home said that when the wind howled around the parsonage winter nights she hoped we would not forget that they had done their mite to make us comfortable. You said we would remember them, and I fulfilled the promise when I scraped the carpet."

"But the coffee?" said Mr. Strong anxiously. "We are expected to supply hot coffee, you know. Is there enough?"

Mrs. Strong made a gesture of despair.

"Mrs. Catherine Wilkins," she said, "accompanied by half a dozen eggs, arrived an hour ago. She demanded the key of the pantry and said she meant to take all responsibility from my shoulders. Coffee is now being made in the wash-boiler and, if my nose does not deceive me, crullers are frying by the score."

"It is kindly meant," said the minister in feeble defence of his flock. "We should look at the motive, my dear."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Strong impatiently, "we look at the motive, but we *feel* the effect, and that is more important in the long run."

Out in the kitchen Mrs. Wilkins, with her skirt turned up around her waist and a towel pinned over the front of her dress, was a very busy and important person.

"Now, Eda," she remarked to the small colored girl she had brought with her, "fly round lively and get the cream; we'll need all we can find, I reckon. Laws! you don't mean to say that one little crock is all the milk there is set to raise? Looks as if Mis. Strong was a *leetle* mite shiftless, don't it? Why, how d'ye do, Mis. Smithers? I'm right down glad to see you, for I'm clean drove to death out here. If you'll jest lend a hand and turn them crullers a bit I'll look fur the powdered sugar. Many people come?"

"Right smart," returned Mrs. Smithers, deftly dropping bits of dough into the boiling lard; "the Crane fam'ly come in as I did. They brought a real handsome motto, 'God Bless Our Home;' July Crane worked it; she's right handy with her needle."

"You don't say!" said Mrs. Wilkins admiringly. "That'll be nice fur the space between the parlor winders, won't it?"

"Mercy on us," exclaimed Mrs. Smithers, "if here don't come the Wilsons with that tribe of tow-headed boys o' theirn! Might jest as well try to empty the Delaware with a thimble as to fill up them young'uns on cakes and coffee. What did they bring?"

Mrs. Wilkins reconnoitered.

"As near as I can make out," she reported, "it's a jug of molasses, but I ain't sure; maybe it's vinegar."

Mrs. Smithers began to pile up the crullers on large platters, while Mrs. Wilkins rolled out a fresh supply. Several other ladies dropped in to assist, and conversation became general.

Mr. and Mrs. Strong received their guests with smiling faces and sinking hearts as they contemplated the fast-filling rooms and the table where the presents were deposited, which did not yet appear to be overcrowded.

"The Lord be with you, Brother Strong," remarked Mr. Richards, the blacksmith, producing a bottle of extract of vanilla. "I got this here trifle in New Castle, thinkin' Mis. Strong might find it handy when makin' cake; you can't git it in Red Lion, y'know."

Mrs. Strong expressed her gratitude in fitting terms.

"I thought a bag o' flour mightn't come amiss, Brother Strong," said Mr. Smiley, the miller, depositing it in a red plush armchair, the pride of the parsonage, which had been presented by the Mite Society of the Glasgow church, and which stood beside the table.

"That was truly kind in you, Brother Smiley," said Mr. Strong gratefully.

"Not at all, not at all," responded the miller, removing his coat and upsetting in so doing the jug of molasses brought by the Wilsons, which rolled to the edge of the table and proceeded to drip slowly over the plush chair, entirely unnoticed by anyone.

"I declare to goodness," said the Widow Grimes, arriving breathlessly, "I do feel clean tuckered out; it's a long pull up that hill. James sez to me, 'Mother,' sez he, 'better have the old blind sorrel hitched up,' sez he, but I thought I'd try walkin'. Brother Strong, how are you? Here's my mite, and wishin' it was more."

She deposited a can of tomatoes on the table.

"I ain't so young as I onct was," she continued, "and that pull up the hill has fairly took my breath. Reckon I'll feel all right after I set a spell."

She subsided heavily into the armchair as she spoke, landing squarely on the paper bag of flour, which naturally burst and rose in clouds around the astonished lady. She was assisted to her feet and borne off upstairs to recuperate, while the Strongs ruefully contemplated the paste of flour and molasses spread over their cherished chair.

In the kitchen crullers spluttered cheerfully, and conversation grew very brisk.

"Does anybody know," inquired Mrs. Smithers, as she refreshed herself with a cup of coffee, "if word was sent to the Farnabys about the donation party?"

"No, it wasn't," said Mrs. Wilkins emphatically. "What would have been the use, I'd like to know?"

No one ventured to reply, but a small woman engaged in grinding coffee remarked that she heard Silas Poole had sent a ton of coal and intended coming himself.

"I seen him the other day," she remarked, "walkin' down the State Road with Josie Farnaby, and I heard——"

"Did you?" said Mrs. Wilkins mysteriously. "You don't say! So did I."

"What did you hear?" inquired Mrs. Smithers eagerly.

"Well," said Mrs. Wilkins as she cut out the last of the crullers, "I ain't a-sayin' it, but they *do* say old Si Poole's goin' to marry Josie Farnaby."

"For the land's sake!" exclaimed Mrs. Smithers, almost dropping the saucer from which she was sipping with much enjoyment.

Mrs. Wilkins nodded emphatically.

"And what's more," she continued, "Josie, she's been keepin' company with the school-teacher (I've seen 'em myself lallygaggin' round the fields together), and she's got her head so chuck full of him she won't look at nobody else."

"But," said Mrs. Smithers, becoming slightly confused, "I thought you said she was goin' to marry Si Poole?"

"Well, so she is, and why? 'Cause her father makes her, that's why. He's a hard man, Joe Farnaby is, and they say Si Poole said he'd foreclose the mortgage if he couldn't get her any other way. That's what Josh heard at the post-office last night, but don't say nothin' about it, will you?"

All the ladies present vowed secrecy, each, however, making a mental reservation in favor of an absent friend.

"When Joe Farnaby come home," continued Mrs. Wilkins, "and sez to Josie she'd got to marry Silas Poole, she up and told him to his face she wouldn't do it and he couldn't make her. Then in comes young Bradley (you know he boards there), and sez as how Josie's goin' to marry *him*, and he reckoned he could look out for her as well as Si Poole, if not a leetle mite better."

"What'd Joe Farnaby say to that?" inquired Mrs. Smithers breathlessly.

"Laws!" returned Mrs. Wilkins as she rubbed the last remnant of dough from her hands, "he jest turned Mr. Bradley out of the house, bag and baggage, and he's stayin' at the Barnetts, over by Bear Station."

"And Josie?"

"Well, I dunno nothing more, except that old man Poole sent a ton of coal to Brother Strong, and said he'd be callin' on him later fur help in tyin' a knot of some sort."

"Well—I—never!" chorused Mrs. Smithers and the rest of the company.

"Mind," said Mrs. Wilkins impressively, "*I* ain't a-sayin' it, but that's what they tell *me*. Now then, Eda, p'ur off the coffee and dish up them crullers. Reckon it's time to hand 'em round."

"On such an occasion as this, Brother Strong," remarked the miller as he balanced a cup of coffee in one hand and a plate of crullers in the other, "it must be pleasant to you, as a shepherd, to see the sperrit of unity and brotherly love prevailin' among your flock. There is even Brother Silas Poole. Long as I've lived in Red Lion, I never seen him at a donation party before."

Mr. Strong replied that it was indeed gratifying, while Mrs. Strong kept an anxious eye on the cup of coffee, which tilted dangerously at times.

A sudden knock at the door caused a pause in the hum of conversation. It was the custom at Red Lion to walk straight in at a donation party, not ask for admission. Mrs. Strong went out into the hall to open the door. She returned in a few minutes and beckoned to her husband.

"What is it, Emma?" he inquired anxiously. "I hope nothing has happened."

"It is Mr. Bradley and Josie Farnaby," she returned as she drew him into the hall; "they want you to marry them, John, and I hope you will not refuse."

"I do not understand——" began the bewildered man.

"Surely," interrupted Richard impatiently, "it is a very simple matter. I wish to marry Miss Farnaby, and she consents. We have come to ask you to perform the ceremony. That is all."

"But I thought," said Mr. Strong,— "that is, I was told by Mr. Poole——"

"John," said Mrs. Strong as she put her arm about the trembling girl, "do as they ask you. Would any girl, of her own free will, marry that old man? Could you reconcile it to your conscience to condemn her to such a life? This is natural; it is right. This is love—I am sure of it."

"I do not like it," said the minister; "it is a marriage without the knowledge and consent of her parents. I should prefer to have nothing to do with it."

"Mother knows," said Josie. "She would have come with us if it had been possible. She said it was the only thing left us, and she helped me to get away."

"John," urged Mrs. Strong, "this child's happiness lies in your hands; do not hesitate any longer."

"There must be two witnesses," said Mr. Strong slowly.

Now, in Red Lion it is difficult to say anything that is not overheard by someone, no matter how softly it is spoken; or to go anywhere, be it ever so quietly, that it is not immediately known throughout the surrounding country. This may seem strange to the uninitiated, because of the widely separated dwellings and generous amount of space available, but it is, nevertheless, a fact which will be vouched for by those who have for any reason tried to hide their light temporarily under a bushel. Therefore it is not surprising that Josie Farnaby's presence in the parsonage that evening, and the cause thereof, was whispered from one to another until it finally reached the ears of Silas Poole, who was inspecting the articles donated under the able supervision of Mrs. Wilkins.

"Them little bead mats," she was remarking, "was brought by the Barneses. Beulah, she made 'em; she works lovely——"

Here the Widow Grimes approached and hastily whispered something which caused Mrs. Wilkins to leave her sentence unfinished and stare at her companion as though he were some new and wonderful species of wild beast. Mr. Poole put down the mats, which he was examining through his glasses with much apparent interest, and trans-

ferred his attention to Mrs. Wilkins's countenance, which was just then quite expressive.

"You seem surprised," he remarked at last.

Mrs. Wilkins caught her breath.

"Surprised," she echoed; "that ain't the right word. Surprised!"

"What has happened?"

"Oh, well," said Mrs. Wilkins, edging slowly away from him, "if you don't know it ain't fur me to tell you. Only to think of them fixin' on to-night to run off, and us all gathered here fur such a different purpose. She's only doin' what her mother done before her, after all; them sorts of things runs in the blood, they say. Only to think of us all bein' here to-night! I wouldn't have believed it if anybody'd told me, that's what I wouldn't!"

"Woman," said Mr. Poole, catching her by the arm, "explain yourself. Who has run away?"

"And him comin' into our midst from a strange place," she continued, "and settin' to work to bewitch her till she don't care nothin' fur nobody else. Oh, it's a queer world!"

"Who is it you mean?" he said, his fingers tightening on the stout arm. "I insist on knowing the name. Who is it?"

"Why," said Mrs. Wilkins volubly, "who should it be but Josie Farnaby and the school-teacher? They've come here to get married, and Brother Strong he wants witnesses to the ceremony. I ain't a-sayin' it, of course, but that's what they tell *me*."

Mr. Poole released Mrs. Wilkins, who rubbed her arm indignantly, and elbowed his way through the guests to the hall.

"It is against my better judgment," said the minister, "and I feel I am wrong in allowing myself to be over-persuaded. You are both too young to realize what a very serious step you are taking. However, if you have definitely made up your minds, I would rather you were safely married before you leave my house. Please take your places."

The door leading into the parlor opened abruptly to admit Silas Poole.

"Stop!" he commanded. "Do you know what you are doing? This girl is a minor," he continued; "it is not lawful for her to marry without the consent of her parents."

"How old are you?" said Mr. Strong, turning to Josie.

"Nineteen last July," she replied.

"By the law of Delaware a girl is of age when she reaches her eighteenth year," said Mr. Strong gravely. "I must ask you, Mr. Poole, not to interrupt unless your objections are more valid."

"Have you examined his license?" inquired Mr. Poole imperturbably.

"I have neglected to ask to see your license," said Mr. Strong,

turning courteously to Richard. "I should have done so, of course, although, no doubt, it is quite correct. Will you show it to me? It is a mere matter of form, you know."

There was a moment's pause, while all eyes were turned on the young man, who had grown very pale.

"I—I have no license," he said at last; "I did not know it was necessary."

"By the law of Delaware," said Mr. Poole to the clergyman, "a license is necessary for a legal marriage."

"It is true," said Mr. Strong, "quite true. I am powerless. How is it, Mr. Bradley, that you have neglected such an important thing? I scarcely understand your position in the case, and I must, of course, decline to perform the ceremony."

"I did not know it was necessary," repeated Richard very miserably; "not being a native of Delaware, I am not familiar with its laws. I have never been married before, you see, and I did not know all that was expected of me. I have a ring, of course. It is important we should be married to-night. Mr. Strong, I hope you will not refuse us this favor, and I will take out the license to-morrow. On my honor."

"It would be well to acquaint yourself with the laws of a State, Mr. Bradley, before taking such a serious step within its boundaries," said Mr. Strong somewhat severely. "I must again decline to oblige you."

"John," said Mrs. Strong sorrowfully, "will you do nothing for them?"

"There is nothing I can do."

"Under the circumstances," remarked Mr. Poole, "it would appear best that Miss Farnaby should return to her father's house. I am going that way and shall be glad to escort her."

"I will not go," said Josie defiantly; "you cannot make me."

"Josie," said Mrs. Strong gently, "you cannot, of course, go away with Mr. Bradley until he is authorized by law to marry you. Would you like to stay here with me? You will be very welcome, dear, and to-morrow he will get this troublesome license and it will be all right; or, will you go home to your mother?"

"It will be better for all concerned if you come home with me," said Mr. Poole, "especially for your mother."

"Josie," said Richard, "don't go. Come with me; we will drive to Wilmington to-night, and in the morning——"

"Wherever you go you will be followed," interrupted Mr. Poole, addressing the bewildered girl. "You know your father's disposition. Do you want harm to befall this man who pretends to love you? Do you wish to be the cause of bloodshed, perhaps murder? It is in your hands."

"Josie," appealed Richard again, "don't listen to him. Come with me."

"Oh Richard!" said Josie, with a burst of tears, "he is right; he is indeed. I must go home. You do not know my father; he stops at nothing to carry his point. I love you, and I will never marry anyone else, but to-night I must go home."

"She is right," said Mr. Strong, "she must go home."

"Come, then," said Mr. Poole, "my carriage is outside."

"Wait," said Mrs. Strong quickly, "I am coming with her, and I will take care of her, Mr. Bradley. Do you think, Mr. Poole, knowing you as I do, that I believe you disinterested in this matter? Do you think I would trust you to take this child safely home?"

"As you please," he returned, with a shrug of his shoulders.

Mrs. Strong wrapped herself in a shawl and put her arm about Josie.

"Come, dear," she said, "come with me. Mr. Poole, we are quite ready."

VIII.

WHEN one has lived for many years in close contact with a more powerful will and keener intellect, it is almost invariably the case that the stronger personality dominates the weaker, until at last the latter becomes merged into the former and degenerates into a mere echo, rarely, if ever, originating an idea or venturing to express an independent opinion.

Occasionally, however, the weaker nature suddenly rebels and does a little thinking on its own account. Perhaps it is even spurred into decisive action if the provocation is very great, but such independence is merely a temporary fluttering of the spirit—a last beating of the wings, as it were, against the relentless bars of the cage, only to sink again into apathy, convinced of the impossibility of regaining liberty and tired out by the attempt.

Mrs. Farnaby was going out. Disregarding the curiosity of her household, she made her toilet, putting on the best she had and surveying herself with much disgust when finally arrayed. It was a pathetic little figure her glass reflected, whose rusty black gown hung loosely upon the shrunken form, with eyes whose color had long ago grown blurred and indistinct, the result of many tears, and small, trembling hands, delicately formed, but roughened and coarsened by much hard work.

Mrs. Farnaby was going out. For sixteen years she had not once passed beyond the boundary of the farm; not once entered a carriage or crossed a threshold other than the place she called home. To-day, however, she had told Josephus to put the gray mare to the buggy, and to have it ready at three o'clock. When the boy had expressed

surprise and asked where she was going, she had sharply bid him to hold his tongue and do as he was told, and he had obeyed her, wondering greatly.

She drove slowly along, regardless alike of the beauty of the day and the surprised faces of the few neighbors she chanced to meet. Mrs. Farnaby composedly driving herself along the public road was a sight to cause conversation and conjecture in Red Lion for some time to come.

One must be preoccupied indeed to drive along what is called the river road in Delaware of an autumn afternoon and remain unconscious of one's surroundings. Small white clouds hurry across a sky whose intense blue is gradually merged into the wonderful purple haze which bounds the horizon on every side; in the glow of the descending sun, leaves, which by morning light hang limply to the trees, dull red or hopelessly dead and yellow, blaze with a glory of scarlet and gold, while long, black shadows fling themselves across any available surface.

Then too there is the river, reproducing the blue of the sky. No true Delawarean who has lived on its shores can forget it. In memory one sees it again and yet again, looking across meadows where red and white cattle pasture, and marshes where late marigolds continue to bloom in spite of frosty nights. One sees the white sails; the Jersey shore, plainly visible in some places, hazy and indefinite in others, and the gray ramparts of the old fort, behind which the moon will soon be rising. Flocks of birds are speeding southward, while crows call to one another as they search the cornfields for a few forgotten grains. One's lot in life may be cast in the city, with every moment fully occupied and little time for retrospection, but when autumn comes, with its golden lights and long shadows, one remembers and wants to be at home again.

Turning aside from the main road Mrs. Farnaby proceeded down a long lane bordered by tall evergreens until she reached a large brick house, whose windows and doors were inhospitably closed, as though to discourage chance visitors. Having fastened the gray mare, she made her way around to the back of the house, where some signs of life were apparent, and knocked at the door. After a little delay it was opened by Mr. Poole himself. They looked at each other for a moment in silence.

"This is an unexpected pleasure," he said at last. "Will you come in?"

She entered and seated herself on the extreme edge of a chair, pulling nervously at the fingers of her gray cotton gloves.

"It is a fine day," he remarked, after waiting in vain for her to speak.

She slowly raised her faded blue eyes and looked directly at him.

"Silas," she said tremulously, "why did you do it?"

"Is there any reason," he inquired, without any pretence at not understanding her, "why I should not get married if I want to?"

"No," she said quickly,—“no, of course not. But not Josie; she's too young. She does not love you, Silas. She would not make you happy, and she would be miserable herself.”

"Do you think," he said, looking steadily at her, "that I care whether she is miserable or not? Has my life for the past twenty-five years been such that I should study the happiness of others? If through her I can reach you, it is enough."

The rusty black bonnet drooped still lower.

"I was wrong," she whispered; "I did you a great injury, but surely you have been revenged. You ruined my life long ago, let that satisfy you; don't visit the sins of the guilty upon the innocent."

"And my life," he said, "what of that?"

She did not reply.

"Come," he said, rising and opening a door,—“come with me.”

She followed him into the adjoining room, which was dark and musty from long disuse. He opened a window, letting in a ray of sunshine.

"This," he said, indicating the carpet with its large, many-colored bunches of flowers, "is the carpet you admired once when I drove you to Wilmington; I went back next day and bought it. Here is the green sofa you thought would wear well and which had such a comfortable back; do you recognize it? There are the footstools you thought would just fit the space each side of the fireplace; how do you like them?"

He pushed them contemptuously aside with his foot and unlocked a drawer in a cabinet which stood between the windows.

"And this," he said, producing a faded velvet case, "do you know who it is?"

He opened the case, disclosing the daguerreotype of a young girl. But for the difference in dress and arrangement of the hair, it might have been Josie Farnaby who smiled at him from the little, old picture; it bore but slight resemblance to the prematurely aged woman at his side, whose eyes and lips had long ago forgotten how to smile.

"Do you know who it is?" he repeated.

"It is a girl," she said slowly, "who was foolish,—wicked, if you like,—who once did you a great injury which caused you, perhaps, to suffer, but who has repented and suffered much herself. A girl to whom you once were very good; a girl you loved."

He held the picture at arm's length and looked at it critically.

"It is the woman who ruined my life," he said, "who destroyed my

faith in humanity, and made me the laughing-stock of the country. The woman who used me as long as she needed me, then threw me aside like an old glove. A woman I shall never forgive."

"Do you remember the day that picture was taken?" she asked.

He said he remembered it very well.

"You had driven me to Wilmington; I wore a pink dress, and you said you liked it."

She paused a moment, and then resumed.

"You said you must have a picture of me in that dress, because you would like to have me always near you as I was that morning."

"As I *thought* you were," he said; "put it that way."

"So you had the picture taken," she continued, "and afterwards we went shopping and had lunch together. We got home just in time for the dance in your new barn. I wore pink still."

"No, you didn't," he interrupted, "you wore white,—thin white,—and you had cornflowers in your hair, the color of your eyes."

"Silas," she said, laying her small, trembling hand on his arm, "if you have any memory of those old days that is not bitter; if when you think of Josie she recalls in any way the girl whose picture you have kept all these years, then, for the sake of that girl, be merciful to her child."

He turned again to the cabinet and opened the drawer.

"I am not asking you to forgive me," she continued, "I know how useless that would be, but I have come to beg you not to insist on this marriage. You were old for me, Silas; you often said so. Think what you must seem to her."

He had found what he wanted and held out his hand, in the palm of which lay a plain gold ring.

"Oh," she cried, "I did not know——"

"Do you know what this is?" he asked.

"I did not know," she repeated faintly, "I am sorry——"

"Look inside," he resumed; "you will find your initials and mine, and a date. Can you guess what it is?"

"The day I bought that ring," he said slowly, "you met Joseph Farnaby in Philadelphia and married him."

"I loved him," she said in feeble defence; "I could not help it."

"That night when I came home and found your note, I put everything connected with you into this room and closed the windows, shutting out light and air. I took this ring in my hand and vowed that you should live to repent what you had done. Have I kept my word?"

She sat down helplessly, covering her face with her hands.

"You filled my husband's mind with unjust suspicions," she said finally; "he believed I was untrue to him—I, who loved him better than my life."

"Your husband, knowing how you had treated me, knew also that what a woman has once done she will do again if she gets a chance. He followed you one evening, at my suggestion, and saw you put a letter under the stone by the gate, taking one away in exchange."

"It was to Mary," she said, "your sister and my friend. You would not let her speak to me, and when she married and went away we wrote to say good-by. You knew that all the time."

"For three nights," he went on, "your husband followed you and saw the same thing. Then he demanded the letters, accusing you of being unfaithful. You were angry at his suspicions and refused to show them, burning them before him. In the quarrel which followed you said you would never speak to him again, and he made you swear it on the Bible, taking a similar vow himself. When your anger cooled you tried to explain, but he would not listen; you learned the meaning of an oath and were unhappy. Then I scored my first point; I have been scoring ever since."

"You have got the land," she said, "and the house—everything we own,—I heard of that just lately,—but you will never have the child. You do not know Josie. She has my face, perhaps, but she's her father's child for all that, and once she makes up her mind nothing moves her. I found that out when she was a baby, and to-day I am glad it is so."

She moved slowly towards the door as she spoke, but turned suddenly with a last appeal.

"Silas," she said, "I am willing to suffer myself. I am used to being unhappy, and a little more or less does not matter. But she is young, and she has done you no harm. Last night you brought her home, but I shall try and help her get away again. You may turn us out if you like; I suppose you will do it, and I do not care, except for Anna. I would rather go to the almshouse than have Josie's life ruined because of my fault."

Mrs. Farnaby had unconsciously straightened her bent shoulders while making her little speech. A faint color came to her pale face, while the light of determination which shone from her eyes seemed to restore their blue once more. Mr. Poole looked at her in surprise.

"Jennie," he said quietly, using her name for the first time, "what a pretty girl you were."

When a man and a woman, contemporaries and past middle age, are engaged in an argument and he suddenly becomes retrospective about her personal appearance, interpolating involuntary remarks concerning it, she feels reasonably sure of carrying her point. Mrs. Farnaby began to believe that her visit had not been in vain.

"You were kind enough to think so, Silas," she replied, "and I remember how good you were to me and how gentle."

"Was I good to you?"

"Indeed you were, and though I made you a poor return, you will be good again. God knows I have repented. Will you promise what I ask? It is the last time I shall trouble you."

"No," he said, with a quick revulsion of feeling, "I will not."

"This one thing," she persisted; "it is not much to ask. If you loved me once, you cannot really hate me now."

"Aye, and what did I love? A pink-and-white complexion; blue eyes that lied to me; lips that belonged to another man: a creature that seemingly was all innocence, but without heart, without truth, without honor. Yes, I loved you. Men are fools."

Mrs. Farnaby walked slowly to her carriage; she had failed, and she knew it. For some reason best known to himself Mr. Poole accompanied her, unfastening the horse and otherwise assisting at her departure.

"It isn't the men who are fools," she said as she took up the reins, "it is the women that listen to them."

The gray mare made her way leisurely home as she thought best; she was not coerced or directed in any way, but she was quite familiar with the road and intended to turn in at the proper gateway, even if the reins did hang loosely over her broad back and no indication whatever was given of her driver's desires.

Mrs. Farnaby sank into a corner of the buggy in a state of mental collapse. As long as she could be seen by Silas Poole she had sat erect and held her head high, but as the distance between them increased she realized the futility of her expedition and knew she had made a mistake. It seemed to her she generally made mistakes, and that trying to correct them was the greatest blunder of all. It was like a skein of knotted thread: the more one worked over it the worse it got.

With a proud consciousness of duty accomplished, the gray mare drew up before the kitchen door. Anna sat upon the doorstep while her father leaned moodily against the house beside her. He watched his wife descend from the buggy and walk up the path towards them in silence. As she was about to enter the house, however, he put his arm across the doorway and stopped her.

"Anna," he said, "ask your mother where she's been."

Mrs. Farnaby summoned the last spark of the resolution and rebellion that had sustained her during the afternoon. With a sudden angry gesture she pushed aside the arm that barred her passage and entered the kitchen. Then she turned and addressed her daughter.

"Tell your father," she said, "that I went out to attend to some business."

She disappeared inside the house, and he turned to his daughter uneasily.

"Where has she been?" he inquired.

But Anna could tell him nothing. Mrs. Farnaby had confided her destination to none but the gray mare, who could be trusted not to betray the confidence.

"It is not possible," he said to himself, as he followed his wife into the house, "that she went—no, she would never do that."

Mrs. Farnaby moved about the room with tightly compressed lips and head rather more erect than usual, while her husband watched her morosely, yet with interest not unmixed with curiosity. Where had she been, and why did she go? Apparently she did not intend to be communicative on the subject, and yet he meant to know. He would inquire again. He looked around for a medium through which to address her, but there was no one near except the cat, which was carefully washing its face in the window, so he was forced to be silent.

His wife was quite aware of the new expression in the eyes which followed her wherever she went, and also of the reason thereof, and it caused her heart to flutter strangely.

"He's going to speak," she thought; "he is going to ask me himself where I went, and then I'll tell him everything."

She went into the next room and sat down to try and regain her composure. On the table beside her was a large family Bible of the type found in many country parlors at that time. She opened it mechanically and a folded paper fell out; it was her marriage certificate.

"Twenty-five years ago to-day," she said as she smoothed the paper,—*"twenty-five years ago to-day. Our silver wedding anniversary."*

She leaned back in her chair, looking blankly at the certificate and thinking of the first years of her married life, before the silence had come between them; after a while she drew her wedding-ring from her finger and looked at it wistfully, absorbed in thought.

"I'll try, anyhow," she said aloud; "he must remember what day it is."

She returned to the kitchen, carrying the marriage certificate and ring. Her husband sat where she had left him, but the light had gone from his eyes and he did not appear to notice her entrance. Mrs. Farnaby crossed the room, still with the unaccustomed flush upon her face, and stood beside him. Putting out her hand, she timidly let it rest upon his arm, but it might have been a stone she touched; going directly in front of him, she laid the certificate upon his knee, pointing to the date and the day of the month; then, very slowly and with trembling hand, held her wedding-ring towards him and extended the third finger of her left hand. For a full minute she stood thus and waited, her eyes fixed upon his face.

Joseph Farnaby rose to his feet, allowing the paper on his knee to fall unheeded to the ground; oblivious to the figure before him, he walked directly out of the room without one backward glance. Mrs. Farnaby stooped and picked up the certificate, restored it to its long resting-place in the big Bible, and herself replaced her wedding-ring. Then she returned to her household duties, but the flush had faded from her cheek, and her step was again slow and spiritless.

"Anna," she said at last, in her usual dull monotone, "tell your father supper's ready."

IX.

THE farmers along the banks of the Delaware were burning marsh. It was necessary that the coarse tufts of grass left untouched by the cattle should be destroyed before cold weather, in order that the pasture next spring might be green and fertile; therefore the dead, dry grass must be burnt off, and this was the appointed time.

A pungent odor of smoke permeated the frosty night air, and all along the shores of the river blazing fields might be seen, with dark figures of men and boys sharply silhouetted against the red background as they jumped from tussock to tussock, applying torch or match to a new place or beating a hasty retreat before an unexpected tongue of flame. The New Jersey farmers were also busy at the same work. Far away across the broad expanse of water a line of fire followed the river, bordering its course and sending little flames upward now and then, which showed bright against the dark sky. And between these brilliant borders flowed the river, dark to-night and sullen, with no path of silver light across it, and no little, white-crested waves rippling merrily wherever the eye could reach.

Richard Bradley sat on the bank and looked out over the black water at the edge of fire on the opposite shore.

"It's a rum thing—love is," he reflected as he pulled the ears of the melancholy fox-hound which sat beside him. "Now, common-sense tells me that there's every reason why I should pack up and leave Red Lion for good and all, and yet I haven't the least idea of doing it unless Josie goes with me. I have about made up my mind I can't get along without her, you see, Rover, and in some way or other I mean to have her. It's a *very* rum thing, love is, and there's no mistaking it when it comes at last."

Rover turned his back and laid down, as though such subjects were beneath contempt, and Richard lit a match and consulted his watch.

"She's very late," he said; "I hope nothing has happened."

The door of the Farnaby house opened, and Anna, muffled in a shawl, stepped out. Feeling her way carefully, she went slowly forward.

"I'll go myself," she said, "just this once. It can't be very wrong. It's quite easy; down the lane to the river, and I can hold on to the fence."

It was a difficult walk for the blind girl. To follow the fence closely was necessary for guidance; therefore she must desert the path and toil along as best she could. Anna went slowly forward, stumbling often, and falling sometimes over unexpectedly high tufts of grass.

"How full the air is of smoke!" she exclaimed.

She could remember how the burning marshes had looked to her when a child, and the odor of the smoke which filled her nostrils recalled a night many years before, when she had stood with her mother and Josie in this same lane, watching the rapidly spreading fields of flame and the red glow which bounded the horizon. She recollected how strange and unreal the familiar landscape had seemed to her, and how she had clung to her mother, half afraid and half delighted, as she watched the dark figure she could not recognize as her father, which seemed to be in the midst of the fire. That night when he came home, leaving the marsh black and dead, he had forced his gun into her unwilling hands, and it had exploded.

Anna leaned against the fence and turned her face towards the marsh.

"I want to see it again," she cried rebelliously; "I want to see everything—the sky, the trees, and the sunshine. I want to see the river, oh, I want to see it! What have I ever done that I should be blind?"

"I wonder what I am like?" she continued, as though addressing someone. "I wish I could look into a mirror, just once, and see what sort of a woman I have grown into. I should like to see Josie. What was it he said, 'Imagine a wild rose, just opening.' I want——"

She bowed her head until it rested against the rough rail of the fence.

"I want to see *him*," she whispered.

The cool night breeze fanned her hot cheek, and a rabbit, hurrying home, scampered by her, its little feet making the dead leaves rustle slightly.

"What's that?" she exclaimed sharply. "Is anybody there?"

But no one answered, so she started on, walking slowly and carefully until she reached the bank of the river. There she paused uncertainly, as though half afraid.

"I ought not to have come," she thought; "it is not right. It's no use to pretend to myself that I came to give him Josie's message. I came because I wanted to hear his voice once more and touch his hand. I am untrue to my sister, who trusts me. I am not sure what I shall do next; I do not seem to know myself to-night. I am afraid! Oh, I am afraid!"

She stumbled over a log and sank down upon it, hiding her face in her hands.

"Why shouldn't I do it?" she sobbed. "Why shouldn't I come if I want to? Must I always put others before myself? Because I am blind, must I crush every natural instinct of my heart? Is that any reason I should be different from other women? Everybody pities me, and I want love, not pity. It is a woman's right to be loved."

The river rippled tranquilly, as though indifferent to human joys or sorrows. It had quieted many an aching heart in its time, and would probably calm many more. The sound of the water soothed the girl insensibly, and as she listened to it she gradually regained her self-control.

"I will be brave," she said, catching her breath quickly; "no one shall ever know. And I will be true to Josie, but I must say good-by."

She rose as she spoke and stood listening intently. Someone was coming down the bank behind her. She drew her shawl over her head and held it tightly around her.

"Dearest," said Richard anxiously as he drew her close to him and kissed her repeatedly, "what made you so late? I was getting worried."

The slender form lay quite still in his arms, but the face was turned aside and she did not reply.

"Why are you so late?" he repeated.

There was no answer, but a sudden breeze lifted the shawl from her head, and a long lock of dark hair fell forward across his arm. At the same time, encouraged by the wind, the marsh blazed up brilliantly, its red glare shining full on the two figures on the river bank. Richard looked quickly down at the face upon his breast.

"Anna!" he exclaimed, "Anna!"

She raised her head and drew herself away from him, replacing the shawl and laughing nervously.

"I'm all right now," she said; "I was a little faint, I think. You thought I was Josie, didn't you? I quite understand."

"What are you doing here," said Richard, "alone and at night?"

"He came soon after supper,—Mr. Poole, I mean,—and Josie could not get away; if she left the house, he would have followed her, you know. That is what they do now."

"Did Josie ask you to do this?" said Richard.

"Oh, no! She only asked me to send you word by Josephus not to wait, but I could not find him, so I came myself. You are going away soon with Josie,—she has told me all about it,—and I wanted to say good-by, and tell you how happy I hope you will be. I should not have been able to do it if I had not come to-night."

The marsh burned cheerfully on one side of them, and on the other

the river lapped lazily against the bank, as though unwilling to exert itself any more than positively necessary.

"Are you angry that Josie did not come?" inquired Anna timidly, after a long pause; "of course you are disappointed, but she could not help it. They watch her so closely, you know, ever since the night Mr. Poole brought her home. She is very unhappy."

"Anna," he said, "since you are here I must confide in you, and you will help us, will you not?"

"You know I will," she replied.

"Since the other night," he resumed,—“and, by the way, Anna, I expect there was a tremendous row at your house that night.”

"Yes," she replied, "there was indeed. Poor Josie!"

"So I supposed. Well, since then, you know, it has been impossible for me to see Josie. I dare not come to the house, and she cannot get away. Now what I want you to tell her is this: On Thursday night at seven o'clock I will be by the wild-cherry tree at the gate leading from the lane into the main road, and I will wait there until she comes. Somehow or other she must manage to get away, for it will be our last chance. Will you tell her?"

"Yes," said Anna. "What else?"

"Tell her that although Thursday is nearly a week off, it is the first night I can get Mr. Barnett's horse,—I have hired it, you know,—and we will drive to Wilmington and send it home from there. I have got that confounded license all right this time and made every arrangement I could think of."

"When you have gone away," said Anna, "when you and Josie are happily married, you will not forget us? You will sometimes remember that we are thinking about you constantly, and wondering how you are and what you are doing?"

"Why, of course we won't forget you," said Richard cheerfully; "you will hear from us often, and after a while this trouble will blow over, as such things always do, and Josie and I will be forgiven and come home like two Prodigals. We shall expect the fatted calf killed for us, I assure you."

"No," said Anna quietly, "you will not be forgiven, and you will never be allowed to come home. Josie realizes that, I think. Any letters you may write will be returned unopened, and we will have no communication with you whatever. You must take good care of her, Mr. Bradley, for she will have no one else."

"I will do my best," he returned briefly.

Anna rose slowly to her feet and adjusted her shawl.

"It is time for me to go home," she said, "and I must trouble you to come with me as far as the yard, for I am afraid to trust myself. It is foolish, I know, but I suppose I must be a little nervous."

"Did you believe I would let you go alone?" asked Richard reproachfully. "You must not think anything I can do for you would ever be a trouble."

"Listen to the water," she said, turning towards the river. "What does it say to you, Mr. Bradley?"

"Why," said he gayly, "for one thing, it says my name is Richard and that you must not be so formal with me, little sister. What does it say to you?"

"It says a great deal to me," she replied, "and sometimes I like to hear it, but to-night it has nothing pleasant to tell me; it says that everything is over, gone like the summer, and nothing can be the same again for me. Let us go home; I want to get away from the river; I feel half afraid of it."

"You are depressed," he said, "and I don't wonder. I suppose it is the thought of losing Josie, and I really feel quite self-reproachful when I think what I am taking away from you; but you see, Anna, I want her so very much that I just must have her. Give me your hand, and let me help you down the bank."

The marsh was nearly burnt out now, and only charred bits of grass remained where blazing fields had illuminated the landscape. They walked slowly home by way of the lane in almost absolute silence.

"It was very good in you to bring Josie's message yourself," said Richard at last. "I was so much surprised to see you here that I forgot to thank you for your trouble."

"I do not deserve to be thanked," she replied, "I wanted to come."

"I meant to see you somehow, if I possibly could, before we went away," he continued; "of course, I wanted to say good-by, and I thought I would like you to wish us luck. I have an idea, you know, that good wishes from you are bound to be fulfilled."

"If my good wishes," she said, "could bring success, your life—yours and Josie's—would be without pain and sorrow. And you will be happy, I am sure of it; how could you help it, loving each other as you do, and being together always? You will live in her, and she in you; that will make your lives complete. You will work for her, protect her, and treasure her. You will stand between her and the world; you will shield her from temptation and suffering; she will be your last thought at night and your first in the morning. Oh, it must be beautiful to be loved like that."

"Some day," said Richard, "you will be loved just that way; but he must be a very good fellow, you know, or I won't give my consent."

"I shall always be pitied, not loved," she said quietly, "and there's such a difference between love and pity."

Richard paused as they reached the yard.

"I hardly like to go any nearer," he said, "having been ordered

off the premises. I will watch you until you are safely in the house. Do you think you can manage it?"

"Yes, of course, and—good-by."

"You will not forget my message?" he said. "Tell her to try and be there as early as possible, although I will wait until she comes, no matter how late it is."

"I will not forget."

"And thank you many times for your good wishes. I am glad to think we have a guardian angel looking out for us, and one whose intercession would surely be heard."

"Good-by, Richard," said Anna softly,—*"good-by."*

He stooped and kissed her forehead.

"Good-by, dear little sister," he said.

X.

FOR days it had rained steadily. The sodden fields and submerged marshes looked melancholy indeed, while such cattle as were unfortunate enough to be without shelter huddled close together, standing back to the wind, with water dripping from every hair, and heads drooped forward as though despairing of better days.

Along the coast the east wind held high carnival. It shrieked around the corners of houses, causing the inmates to look affectionately at their fires and draw closer to them; it flourished among the leafless trees, tossing their branches about like plumes, and twisting their trunks until sometimes the roots, being unable to withstand the strain, came bursting through the saturated earth, as with a mighty crash the tree fell, crushing beneath it whatever chanced to be in its path. At such times the wind would lull, as though holding its breath in consternation at what it had done, only to start again in a moment with redoubled force. It agitated the already swollen river, churning its waters until the white spray rose high in the air and the waves raged furiously.

"Let us in," they cried, as they beat against the bank with ever-increasing force, "give way, and let us in."

"I will not," said the bank; "I was built to keep you out, and I am strong. You shall not come in."

"Come down," called the wind, as its strength increased. "I know your weakest point, and I will drive the water there. Together we will conquer you. Come down."

For two days the raging of wind and waves had been ineffectual; the bank was invincible and triumphant. The evening of the third day drew near; the waves continued to beat ceaselessly, the violence of the wind was undiminished, and the bank still stood firm; but the strain was great, and it was getting tired.

Mrs. Farnaby moved listlessly about, preparing the evening meal, and occasionally glancing towards Josie, who sat, pale and silent, shivering at the fury of the storm. Anna crept close to her sister, holding her nerveless hand and stroking it gently with the silent sympathy which is so comforting.

"It is Thursday night," whispered Josie at last. "He was to wait by the wild cherry-tree at the gate. I must go."

"He will not be there," returned Anna in the same tone; "the storm is too great; he will not expect you."

"He will be there; you do not know him. I *must* get away."

The shutter banged fiercely against the window, shattering a pane of glass to atoms, and Mr. Farnaby rose and stuffed an old coat in the aperture. While he was thus occupied Josie stole silently towards the door leading into the hall.

"Come back," he said, suddenly perceiving her,—*"come back, I say."*

The girl slowly returned to her chair and resumed her air of apathy, which the glitter in her eyes somewhat contradicted.

"You were going to meet your lover," he said slowly; "you thought to slip away without my knowledge, but you can't do it. You think he means to marry you. You are a fool."

"I am your child."

"And your mother's also. You presume to put your will against mine; there again you are a fool. I have said you shall marry Silas Poole, and I never break my word."

"And I," replied Josie, "have said I would not marry him. I too can keep my word."

"If you leave the house to-night," he continued, "I will go with you. Later, I intend to go alone and meet him; he shall not wait in vain. To-night I mean to settle this question for ever, and you will never see him again. Understand that fully—never again."

Mrs. Farnaby paused by her daughter, putting her arm around her and drawing the golden head against her breast.

"There, dear, there," she said soothingly, checking the angry retort that sprang to Josie's lips, "come with mother; come lie down, and after a while I'll bring you a cup of tea."

"Anna," said her husband, as his face darkened still more, "tell your mother I am watching closely; she can't hoodwink me to-night. Josie must stay where she is."

"Tell your father, Anna," responded Mrs. Farnaby quietly, "that he is at liberty to watch all night. Josie shall come with me."

Leaving the door wide open, as though to enable her husband to watch better, Mrs. Farnaby led her daughter upstairs and persuaded her to lie down upon the bed. As she covered her warmly and bent

over to kiss her a blast of wind swept around the old house until it trembled upon its foundations.

"Oh mother," sobbed Josie, "mother——"

"I know, dear, I know. Cry, Josie, don't try to stop, my darling. It will do you good."

With trembling hands she stroked the flushed face, straightened the pillows, once more adjusted the cover, and returned to the kitchen with her usual air of indifference.

Joseph Farnaby sat motionless, gazing after his wife and daughter as they disappeared up the narrow stairway. Josie's unlooked-for obstinacy had roused in him a determination to conquer her. He had expected tears, reproaches, perhaps, but not open rebellion. The aversion he had first felt towards the marriage and the reluctance with which he had agreed to it had vanished entirely. He was now conscious only of a stolid determination to break the spirit of the girl and to force her to acknowledge the supremacy of his will. And this Josie refused to do.

She had said she would not marry Silas Poole, even though the house were pulled down over their heads, and it was evident she meant to keep her word. Her father recognized his own indomitable will, looking straight at him from eyes so like his wife's, yet without their gentleness, and realized that the victory would not be an easy one. He intended to carry his point, no matter at what cost; he expected to see the flash of defiance fade from the blue eyes and be replaced by tears of submission. And he knew that a crisis was inevitably close at hand.

As he sat grimly upright, with his unlighted pipe in his mouth, he felt a light touch upon his arm and turning looked into the dark eyes of his other daughter, the child dear to his heart, yet blind because of him.

"Anna," he said, putting his arm gently around her, "this is a dull home for you, my dear. After a while I hope it will be better. I am doing my best for you, Anna; always try and remember that, won't you?"

"I love you, father," she whispered, laying her soft cheek against his.

He drew her closer to him and stroked her hair silently.

"But I love Josie too," she continued, "and she's very miserable. For my sake, father, don't——"

"Hush, Anna, you do not understand."

The rain beat against the windows, and the roar of the waves grew more distinct as the storm increased in violence.

"Listen," said Anna, "how the wind howls. You will not go out to-night, father? Promise me."

"I must go out.

"Anna," he said, after a moment's silence, "suppose you had been in Josie's place, what would you have done? Would you have allowed your own selfish desires to bring poverty and wretchedness to those near and dear to you? I don't think so. I am sure you would trust me to know what was best for you, and believe me, not a stranger whom six months ago you did not know."

Joseph Farnaby looked into the sightless eyes of his best-loved child and saw reflected there the light which shone in Josie's eyes when she had refused obedience. He saw his own nature reproduced where he least expected it, and the revelation was distasteful to him.

"If I were Josie," she said slowly, "I would marry the man I loved and who loved me. I should be sorry if you thought me wrong, it would grieve me deeply, father, but I should marry him.

"You are not angry at what I have said, are you?" she continued after the pause which followed her last speech. "We'll always be together, father, you and I, and we'll always love each other—always. Kiss me and tell me you are not angry."

She put her hand on his arm as she spoke, but he shook it impatiently off, saying with an oath that she was just like all the rest, and the sooner she got out of his sight the better for both of them.

Surprised and grieved at the unexpected repulse, Anna made her way up the narrow stairway.

"He didn't mean what he said," she thought as she entered Josie's room. "Poor father; he is tired and worried to-night; he will be sorry to-morrow. He didn't mean it, I know."

Feeling her way carefully to the bed, she knelt beside it, stroking her sister's hot head tenderly. It was Josie that first broke the silence.

"He must not meet father," she said, "and he will wait for me. I can't get away; I can't even send him word. Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?"

"You are sure he will be there?"

"You don't know what love is or you would not ask that."

"No," said Anna quietly, "perhaps not, Josie."

"He's waiting now," sobbed Josie, "in all the rain, and he will wait, and wait, until at last—oh Anna! and I can't even send him word."

"Hush," said Anna gently, "don't cry so, Josie. I'll go; no one watches me, and I can easily slip out. Give me your message, and it will be all right."

Josie sat upright in her surprise.

"Oh Anna," she said breathlessly, "you couldn't! You would be wet through and blown away. Hear the wind."

"You would go if you could. The rain and wind are just the same for both of us."

"I would go, of course," said Josie, "but that is different. I would not come back. How could you find your way?"

"It is very easy, dear. Follow the fence to the first gap, then turn to the left; that takes you down the lane; the turn to the right leads to the river. Don't I know every inch of ground near the house, and haven't I been down to the gate alone many and many a time?"

Josie went to the window and looked out.

"The wind has fallen, I think," she said, "but it is raining in torrents and is very dark. I never saw so black a night. You couldn't go, Anna; it is impossible."

"It will not be any darker than usual for me, you know," replied Anna quietly, "and the distance is so short I'll be back before any one misses me."

"Richard could see you safely home," said Josie doubtfully.

"Why, of course he would. What do you suppose could happen to me beyond getting a little wet? I believe, Josie, that God keeps a special watch over those He has afflicted, and takes care of us always. Don't be afraid for me, dear. I will be home before you realize I have gone, and you will have dry clothes ready for me, won't you?"

When we are overtaken by our first real trouble we become, as a rule, absorbed in our grief and selfish because of it, receiving sympathy carelessly as our right, not accepting it gratefully as an inestimable gift. When sorrow comes again and yet again, as it will surely come to all, we appreciate the tears shed with and for us, realize the sacrifices often made for our sakes, and treasure in our hearts the memory of the love which prompted such sympathy.

It seemed to Josie only natural that her sister should be willing to help her in any way possible, and therefore she hesitated no longer. Anna was quite accustomed to making her way about the yard and lane alone, and nothing worse than getting wet could happen to her.

"Come," said Anna cheerfully, "give me your message and let me go."

"Tell him," said Josie, "why I did not come, and beg him to go away at once. Tell him that to-morrow I promise to be at the Bear Station in time for the noon train. You must help me get away by taking father somewhere for a little while; you will, won't you?"

"Yes, Josie, if I can."

"And oh, Anna, if you are going, don't wait any longer. Think how wet he must be and how cold. An hour ago I was to have been there. and he has waited all this time."

"I'm going now. Kiss me, Josie, and help me find a shawl."

Josie put her arms about her sister and kissed her lovingly.

"I ought not to let you go, Anna," she said, "I know I ought not; but what can I do? Richard will bring you back to the house, and we will never forget what you have done for us. After we are married you shall come and live with us; we have often planned how happy we would make you, and how we would have your eyes examined by the best oculists. Perhaps your sight can be restored, you know; Richard says it's quite possible, and——"

"He is very kind," interrupted Anna hastily, "and so are you, dear, to remember me and plan such lovely things for me, but I don't think I can live with you, Josie. Now you really must let me go, or father will get there first."

"Yes," said Josie nervously, guiding her sister to the door, "there are the stairs, Anna, and do be as quick as you can. Think of his waiting so long in all the storm. Oh, if I could only go myself! Mind the step; you are sure you are not afraid? I'll have dry things ready for you when you get home, and——"

Passing quietly through the kitchen, unchallenged by either parent, Anna went into the parlor and out of the seldom used front door. Josie, listening intently, heard it close, and at the same time a fresh gust of wind sent the rain against the window with renewed vigor. With trembling hands she raised the sash and leaned out.

"Anna," she called, "come back. You must not go. Come back."

But her voice was lost in the noise of the wind and roar of the river, for the Delaware was very angry to-night.

Closing the door carefully behind her, Anna advanced a few steps down the familiar path, but the wind came hurrying around the corner and, forcing her back against the house, pinned her securely there, dropping her disdainfully at last, as though scorning to contend with so slight a thing. Taking advantage of a momentary lull, she went forward again with outstretched hands, hoping soon to touch the fence which was to be her guide and support.

The wind was behind her now, in front of her, and on every side. It got under her shawl and loosened her hair; it wound her wet skirts about her until she felt as though she were in a vice; it drove the rain against her face, down her neck, and into her shoes; it came from all points of the compass at once, taking her breath and forcing her to stand motionless; and then it gathered all its strength behind her, driving her swiftly before it, pushing her on relentlessly, until she stumbled and fell, after which it rested a while.

Pulling herself together as well as she could, Anna slowly rose to her feet. She felt confused and bewildered and not confident that she was going in the right direction; surely she should have reached the fence by this time. But there was no fence to reach. Since early

evening it had lain disconsolately in the mud, with the wild cherry-tree by the gate beside it, broken and humiliated.

As she hesitated the wind returned, refreshed and invigorated by its brief rest. It snatched her shawl from her and sent it sailing through the air like a large kite; it twisted her this way and that, turning her wherever it wished, and finally drove her before it towards the marsh, which was now completely submerged, with here and there a melancholy tuft of grass showing above the water. Helpless and frightened, Anna fled before the wind. Her long hair, heavy with rain, blew about her face and shoulders, the ends cutting her like little whips. At every step she sank above her shoe in water, but still she was forced on, until at last something stopped her. It was a fence, slightly unsteady, perhaps, and leading over the marsh to the river, not down the lane, as she supposed, but still a fence and a support.

"It's only a little way now," she panted, holding on to it with all her strength, "only a little way, and he will help me get home."

Slowly and painfully she toiled on towards the river, raging in its might and rising steadily; with every step she sank deeper into the mud and water, until, quite exhausted, she paused for breath. For the first time in her life she was alone in the marsh and in danger.

The river bank had done its best, but the battle had been long and the end was near; it was weary and weak, while wind and waves were strong and triumphant. Again and again they hurled themselves upon the bank, until at last it succumbed, as with a mighty roar the water swept over it into the forbidden territory beyond.

Wave followed wave in quick succession. Bridges spanning adjacent creeks were torn asunder; causeways were flooded, and hapless vessels driven miles inland, to be discovered stranded high and dry when the river subsided. At the first rush of water the fence to which Anna clung trembled and fell. God must indeed keep very special guard over His afflicted to help her to-night.

In the little room at home Josie knelt on the floor with her face pressed against the window, gazing anxiously into the darkness and vainly trying to distinguish the figure for which she waited so impatiently.

Downstairs Joseph Farnaby sat grimly watching the door; one daughter had passed through it lately, and he had seen her enter the parlor without comment; she was at liberty to go where she pleased; it was the other for whom he waited.

Mrs. Farnaby went listlessly about her work; meals must be cooked and dishes washed, though heads and hearts ache in unison and hands and feet are weary. She had seen Anna go upstairs, but had not

noticed her return and supposed her still with her sister. Placing the coffee on the table, she went to the foot of the stairs.

"Anna," she called, "tell your father supper's ready."

XI.

RICHARD BRADLEY stood with his hand on the latch of the door of the Barnett house.

"I don't suppose," he said, "that it's worth while to take an umbrella."

"It's a night," returned Mr. Barnett, "such as I never seen before. It's blowin' from the east and the west and the north *and* the south all to onct, and rainin' cats and dogs. 'Tain't safe fur man or beast to be abroad, Mr. Bradley, and though it's none of my business what you do and where you go, I'd advise you to stay at home. 'Tain't safe, I tell you, 'tain't safe."

"Nevertheless, I must go."

"Well," said Mr. Barnett, crossing his legs comfortably, "have your own way. But if you go, you'll have to walk, fur the old bay mare don't leave her stall this night,—not if the President hisself wanted to make a train. So that's all I've got to say about it."

"You agreed to hire her to me," said Richard, "and if anything should happen I am willing to pay all damages."

"There ain't a buggy," returned Mr. Barnett, "as wouldn't capsize before you'd went half a mile. I've had that mare now goin' on twenty year, and I've took good care of her. She ain't goin' to plunge along them roads to-night, with trees crashin' down every little while, and shingles from barns flyin' through the air like snowflakes—not if I know it."

Seeing that argument was useless, Richard wasted no more words but went out, closing the door with a good deal of force. He was angry and discouraged, for the walk before him was long and he felt by no means sure that Josie would venture out, even if it were possible for her to leave the house unnoticed. Still, it was an appointment he must in honor keep, so he pulled his cap well down over his eyes and started forth.

With great difficulty he made his way down the road, often running into the hedge and stumbling over branches in the darkness. Leaning against the trunk of a tree for support, he paused for breath. It groaned and swayed ominously, and Richard sprang hastily back; he was none too soon, for the tree now lay across the road, with its branches fluttering dismally in the wind. Something struck him smartly on the back; it was a bit of board, probably from some neighboring barn. Should he go on?

Even if he could manage to walk the three miles stretching out

before him, was it at all probable that she would be there? He thought not. Common-sense would tell her they could not reach Wilmington that night. Josie was reasonable; she was sensible. Of course she would understand it was impossible for him to come; of course she would not expect him. No doubt she had come to that conclusion early in the day. But if she did go, what then? Suppose——

Something struck the ground in front of him and beside him. Richard bent down to examine and discovered two more bits of plank half buried in the mud from the force with which they had fallen. It would appear that the barn was being demolished very fast, and there were, doubtless, many other boards to come.

He turned and slowly retraced his steps.

"You were right, Mr. Barnett," he said as he removed his dripping coat, "it is not a fit night for man or beast to be abroad. No one could possibly venture out."

"Anna," called Mrs. Farnaby again, "tell your father supper's ready."

Receiving no reply, she went upstairs in response to a hysterical sob from Josie, while her husband sat waiting until his blind child should call him to supper.

Already he reproached himself bitterly for having repulsed her, and regretted the harsh words with which he had thrust her aside. For the first time since they had told him she would never see again he had failed to respond to her slightest advance; for the first time he had forgotten the affliction he had brought upon her, and he wanted to show her that he was sorry. He intended to put his arm about her and tell her he did not mean what he had said. So he waited for the light touch and sweet voice, which for so many years had never failed to summon him to his meals.

He waited a long time. The supper on the table grew cold and uninviting, and still he waited. At last hurried footsteps came down the stairs, and Mrs. Farnaby, followed by Josie, entered the kitchen.

"Joe," she said excitedly, breaking the silence of years by addressing him directly, "Anna is not in the house; she has gone out."

He sprang angrily to his feet.

"Ask your mother," he said to his daughter, "where she has gone."

But Josie could only sob pitifully, hiding her face in her hands as her father continued to address her.

"So this was your plan," he continued slowly; "you could not get away yourself, so you sent her. She never went out this wild night on any errand of her own; you sent her out in this storm to carry your message. You did not want him to meet me, so you sent her to prevent it. This was the scheme your mother helped you to concoct when

you went upstairs together to-night. You sent her out, not caring what became of her."

He started to the door, but Mrs. Farnaby stood before it.

"Joe," she cried, "don't look at me like that. I didn't know she was going. Indeed I did not. Speak to me before you go. I knew nothing about it, I tell you, nothing."

"Tell your mother," he said, "to move away from the door and let me out. Tell her that I don't believe her; tell her I ceased to believe her sixteen years ago.

"As for you," he continued, "still addressing Josie, "remember that you are responsible for whatever happens to-night. If Anna does not come home with me, safe and well, you are free to go where you please and marry whom you like: I never wish to see your face again."

"Don't say that, Joe," sobbed his wife, "you don't mean it. Speak to me before you go out, even if you speak harshly. It was a bad oath, —a bad oath,—and should be broken. I did not know she was going out, I tell you. Do you think I would have let her go? She is my child as well as yours; don't you suppose I love her too? Only tell me——"

But he pushed her impatiently aside and went out into the night without a backward glance.

How the wind howled and the rain beat against him. Somewhere in the darkness she was wandering, cold and lost.

"If you had not repulsed her," whispered Conscience, "if you had kept her beside you, as you should have done, she would not be cold and lost."

He silenced Conscience promptly. It was her mother's fault, not his.

"Anna," he shouted, "I'm coming."

The row of cedar-trees behind the barn had fallen like ninepins and lay in a melancholy row upon the ground. He stumbled over them and turned away towards the river.

"The marsh," he thought; "my God! if she should be in the marsh!"

Many familiar landmarks had succumbed and but few trees remained uninjured. One of these, however, was the big walnut in the lane. This veteran of many storms still waved its branches triumphantly as its huge trunk bent this way and that, as though proudly conscious of its strength."

Louder even than the voice of the wind was the sound of the waves as they dashed themselves against the river bank. Again and again they thundered ominously as they advanced for a new assault.

"I'm coming, Anna, I'm coming."

Plunging desperately down the lane, he ran against the trunk of

the walnut-tree in the darkness. Tired out by the buffeting of the wind, he paused for a moment's rest. Which way should he go?"

Something besides the noise of wind and waves became audible, and he listened intently. It was the sound of rushing water. Again he listened.

"The bank," he cried, "the bank is down!"

The wind gathered all its strength for a final effort, and then the walnut-tree was down also, with something pinned to the earth beneath it.

XII.

"In the midst of life we are in death," quoted Mrs. Smithers sententially.

"Ah, that's true indeed," returned Mrs. Wilkins, putting the teapot in front of the fire.

"The hand of the Lord," continued Mrs. Smithers, "has been laid heavy on this house. What a storm it was, to be sure."

The two ladies were in possession of the Farnaby kitchen. According to the kindly custom of the country, they had immediately offered their services to the stricken family when the news of the disaster reached Red Lion, and were combining much practical assistance with a modicum of melancholy pleasure at being in the midst of such an unheard-of calamity.

"Long as I've lived on the Delaware River," said Mrs. Wilkins, "I've never knowed it to act so before. They do say it's what's called a tidal wave. I ain't a-sayin' it, but that's what they tell me."

"There ain't a barn within miles," responded Mrs. Smithers, "as has got a roof left on it. Did you lose anything, Mis. Wilkins?"

"Only the black sow, praise be given! Josh, he takes on fearful about it (and she was a good breeder, to be sure), but I tell him to think what happened here and be thankful."

The tea being drawn by this time, they sat down, each in a rocking-chair, to refresh themselves by a social cup.

"How's he?" inquired Mrs. Smithers, indicating by a jerk of her thumb the room above.

"Sinkin' fast," whispered Mrs. Wilkins; "they do say he won't last the day out."

The rocking-chairs creaked mournfully as they swayed to and fro.

"And Mis. Farnaby," resumed Mrs. Wilkins, still whispering, "is clean distracted, callin' on him not to die without speakin' to her, and him a-layin' there like a log with nothin' to show whether he hears her or not. It's enough to melt a heart of stone to hear her."

"It's my belief," remarked Mrs. Smithers, "that he'd continnoo to lay that-a-way, even if he did hear her."

Mrs. Wilkins nodded emphatically, then put down her cup and leaned close to her companion.

"She's sent fur Si Poole," she whispered.

Mrs. Smithers stared at her incredulously, and finally ejaculated, "Well, I never!"

There was silence for a time, then Mrs. Wilkins resumed, with a glance towards the darkened parlor,—

"Anna—does anybody know how it happened?"

"When the water went down," said Mrs. Smithers, wiping away a tear, "she was found in the marsh, drowned. Nobody knows how she got there. And her father was found under the big walnut-tree; pinned to the earth he was, and what a time they had to get the tree off him."

"Many's the basket of nuts I've picked up under that tree," said Mrs. Wilkins in momentary retrospect, "and what good ones they always was. Dear, dear! And he's never spoke a word, has he?"

"Onct," said Mrs. Smithers, "he opened his eyes and looked around wild-like, and sez, sez he, 'Anna, I'm comin',' sez he, but that's all; and it's my belief, Mis. Wilkins, that he'll pass away without a word more."

"The minister," said Mrs. Wilkins, "he's here, ain't he?"

"Brother Strong and his wife was here when I fust come. He's upstairs now. There's nothin' he can do, of course, but he offers up a prayer frequent jest to show his good will."

Mrs. Strong passed through the kitchen and entered the silent parlor; her hands were filled with white flowers, which she placed in those other hands, so peacefully folded. Anna lay as though she were asleep; her eyes, sightless no longer, were closed, the dark lashes showing distinctly against the pale cheeks, and her lips were slightly parted, as if a smile had but just left them. The minister's wife stooped and kissed the cold brow tenderly, stroking the dark hair with reverent hand.

"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," she murmured, placing an opening rose on Anna's breast.

The sound of rapidly approaching wheels became evident, and Mrs. Strong went to the door to admit Silas Poole.

"You will not be surprised," she said in rather a hesitating manner, "if Mrs. Farnaby is slightly hysterical. She may not mean all that she says, you know, and—and you will be kind to her, Mr. Poole, and remember that she has had a great shock. She is not quite—"

"Do not be afraid," returned the old man, "I have been hard enough in my time, but to-day I have come to make what reparation I can. Does he still live?"

"We fear the end is very near."

"Then take me upstairs at once, there is something I must say to him while he can understand it. Please do not delay."

Mrs. Strong led the way up the narrow staircase and into the room above, where Mrs. Farnaby and Josie knelt beside the bed where husband and father lay motionless. The doctor and clergyman had withdrawn to the window, leaving to wife and child the first glance, if the eyes should open; the first word that might fall from the pallid lips.

In that quiet room there was also another—a Presence, unwelcome yet obtrusive, invisible yet apparent. It stood before the doctor demanding recognition, and he bowed before it and turned aside; the clergyman knew it also, and greeted it on his knees. Both had met it many times before; both would probably meet it many times again in years to come. It passed by Josie, and she shivered, hiding her face she knew not why. It came close to Mrs. Farnaby, and she refused to recognize it, waving it defiantly aside; it came closer, and she acknowledged it with bowed head and aching heart. Her cup of bitterness was full at last, pressed down, and running over.

It came near, very near, to Joseph Farnaby and lingered there, but he was not yet ready to receive it, so the Presence withdrew somewhat, waiting for the appointed time.

Mrs. Strong opened the door and motioned to Mr. Poole to enter. He stood for a moment unnoticed; then Mrs. Farnaby lifted her head and looked at him.

"So you have come," she said, rising and walking towards him.

"You sent for me."

"Yes," she replied, "I sent for you. I wanted you to see your work; it is nearly finished now. Are you satisfied?"

He made no reply, and she continued, pressing her small, nervous hands tightly together.

"Look at my husband, and remember that you have killed him. Look at me, and triumph in my misery. Go downstairs and look at my dead child, and realize that but for you she would be living. Is it enough? Are you satisfied, or is there more to come? More——"

"Stop," he said, putting out a deprecating hand; "stop. I—I cannot bear it."

"Stop?" she repeated. "Why should I stop? Did you ever once pause to consider what you were doing? Did you care that your revenge, planned so carefully, would bring poverty and wretchedness to the innocent, who had done you no harm, as well as to me. Do you think——"

A slight movement from the bed caused her to pause and look towards it. Her husband had opened his eyes and made an effort to speak.

"Joe," she cried, throwing herself on her knees beside him, "Joe, look at me. Speak to me, speak to me! It was a bad oath, a bad oath. Speak to me!"

His eyes turned towards Josie, and he moved his lips slightly.

"Anna," he said faintly, "I'm coming."

Yes, that was true; he was going very fast.

Again he looked at his daughter with a puzzled expression, and putting out his hand touched her hair.

"It is only Josie, father," she said brokenly, "that's all."

"Anna," he repeated, "where is Anna?"

"Quite safe, father; you will see her soon."

The Presence advanced a little and he closed his eyes wearily.

"Joe," sobbed his wife, "you won't leave me without a word; you can't do that, surely. Open your eyes and look at me."

Very slowly the lids were raised and the Presence once more retreated. Beckoning to Silas Poole to approach, Mrs. Farnaby took her husband's passive hand in both of hers, pressing it close to her breast.

"Joe," she said, "I have something to say to you, and you must hear me. I am not what you thought me—can you understand?"

"Those letters, Joe, those wretched letters, were to Mary Poole. Many and many a time I've tried to tell you this, but you wouldn't listen. Often and often I've written it, but you tore up my letters before me unread. I love you, Joe, I love you, and I'm telling you the truth."

The inquiring eyes looked directly into hers.

"Ask this man," she continued, pointing to Mr. Poole, who stood with bowed head at the foot of the bed. "Let him tell you how for years he has planned to bring ruin and unhappiness to you, misery and degradation to me. Now, in the day of his triumph, let him tell you that I have never for a moment been unfaithful to you by word or thought. Ask him if I speak the truth. He knows."

"It is true," said Silas Poole solemnly, "before God."

"Tell him," she commanded, turning to Mr. Poole, "that you lied to him, not once, but often."

"I lied to you," repeated the old man; "yes, it is true, all true."

In the stillness which enveloped the room the ticking of the doctor's watch was distinctly audible as it raced on, hurrying to keep pace with time.

"Joseph Farnaby," said Mr. Poole slowly, "can you hear me and understand what I say?"

A slight motion of his head replied in the affirmative.

"You and your wife once did me a great injury. You were my friend, but you stole her from me and married her, knowing she was

pledged to me. Then I determined to be revenged upon you both, and for years I waited for my opportunity."

The watch ticked faster than ever in its endeavor to keep up with time, while the monotonous voice went on:

"You were jealous of your wife and it made you suspicious. You were very ready to listen to me and believe what I insinuated. You were a fool. After you quarrelled your hard nature prevented you from learning the truth, for I had lied to you. Do you still follow me? I see that you do.

"Well, you know the rest. How little by little I have ruined you, and how at last I proposed to exchange the property for your daughter."

Mrs. Farnaby caught her breath as though she would interrupt him, but he waved her aside and went on.

"I have lived a lonely life enough, and I thought a young thing about the house would be pleasant. Last night, however, I could not sleep; it was the storm, I suppose. I was haunted by your wife's face as it used to be and as it now is; I thought of this child, who would also lose her youth and fade as her mother had done. The success of the revenge I had worked for so many years suddenly seemed very small and unworthy of a man. I almost determined to come here this morning and destroy the notes I held on condition that Josie should marry the man she loved. I had decided to do this, not for your sake or your wife's, but for the girl who had loved me once, and died to me long ago. Do you still understand?"

Again a slight motion of the head answered him.

"This morning I heard what had happened here, and I knew I was responsible. It is more than I ever intended; I have caused the death of that blind child, who never harmed me, and I am bitterly repenting what I have done.

"Here are your notes. I wish to destroy them in the presence of witnesses. You will leave your farm, unencumbered, to your wife, who has never by word or deed been unfaithful to you,—do you hear me?—never for a moment."

The Presence hovered very near now, but Mrs. Farnaby thrust it away, compelling the tired eyes to open again by the very intensity of her desire.

"Joe," she cried, "you heard him, didn't you? Look at me. Speak to me. Think of the years I have waited. Remember the girl you loved long ago; she's here now, on her knees beside you, asking you to tell her you believe in her and love her still. Call me by my name once—just once. Speak to me, Joe, speak to me."

The pale lips moved slightly as he looked towards his daughter.

"Josie," he said faintly, "tell—your—mother——"

But the Presence interposed, and bending over Joseph Farnaby set the seal of silence upon his lips.

XIII.

"MR. STRONG," said Richard, "I must speak to Josie."

The curtains were raised to admit the sunlight into the little parlor. They had found them raised when they returned from the churchyard at Red Lion that afternoon, and a strong odor of coffee permeating the house. Mrs. Wilkins had attended to all such details with a faithfulness which left little unthought of. After the services at the house were over and the dreary procession of carriages slowly filed out of sight, she had fled to dust-brush and cook-stove as the best method of assuaging her emotion.

"I'll make it good and strong," she said as she ground the coffee vigorously, while large tears chased each other down her cheeks. "It will hearten 'em up a bit when they come back, poor things, whether they want it or not. Dear, dear, what a world it is! And she looked as pretty as wax-work a-layin' there so peaceful and happy. The ways of the Lord is hard to understand when it comes to visitin' the sins of the fathers or the mothers on such as her, unless it might be He wanted her Hisself. Fur which," added Mrs. Wilkins magnanimously, "I don't blame Him."

For the last hour Richard had waited in the deserted parlor, roaming restlessly about it, or sitting moodily with folded arms gazing out of the window. He wanted to see Josie alone, and it seemed impossible to do so. Messages had been unavailing, and he therefore welcomed Mrs. Strong eagerly when she entered the room.

"I must see Josie," he repeated.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Strong, "there is no reason you should not. I will tell her you are waiting."

"She will not come," said Richard; "I have sent several messages. She has never seen me since it all happened, but she wrote to me to go away at once. She said she hoped never to see me again."

"Poor little girl," said Mrs. Strong.

"You have been very kind to us," he continued, "and I thought perhaps you would tell me what it all means."

"It means," she replied, "that Josie is overwrought and excited. She blames herself, you know, for Anna's death, and thinks, perhaps, to atone somewhat by giving up what she loves best in the world. Surely you do not doubt her, Mr. Bradley?"

"But," said Richard, "suppose she persists in this strange delusion; what am I to do? I cannot force myself upon her if I am unpleasant to her."

"I will speak to her," said Mrs. Strong; "I think she will see you,

but, Mr. Bradley, you must be patient, and—pardon me if I seem officious. You love her sincerely, do you not? You have no wish yourself to break your engagement?"

"I did not know how much I loved her until to-day," said Richard quietly. "I shall always love her, Mrs. Strong, and it will be my greatest happiness to fulfil my engagement. It would be the object of my life to make her forget this awful tragedy, and to try and show her my appreciation of what she has suffered for my sake. But she will not see me, and I cannot blame her, for I am in a measure responsible for what has happened."

The young man spoke simply and earnestly, and Mrs. Strong laid her hand sympathetically upon his arm.

"No," she said, "you are not responsible. Josie, poor child, considers herself to blame, while Mr. Poole believes the fault was his. He acknowledges being at the root of all trouble to this most unhappy family, and seems to bitterly repent what he has done. Do not let us speak of him, for I cannot yet find it in my heart to forgive him."

"Suppose," he said, "I must leave here alone, what will become of Josie? What is there for her to live upon?"

"They have the farm," said Mrs. Strong. "You know Mr. Poole destroyed the notes, and it is therefore unincumbered. The oldest son will come home and manage the place; they will have enough to live comfortably."

"Mrs. Strong," said Richard, "when I think of Anna—blind, and wandering in the marsh that dreadful night——"

"Hush," she said, "do not dwell so upon it. I am going now to find Josie for you."

Mrs. Strong was absent for some time; evidently Josie was obdurate. Richard walked impatiently about the room; the air, still heavy with the odor of flowers, oppressed him, so he opened the window and stood beside it.

"Out-of-doors the sun shone brightly and the usual sounds of the farm were apparent. A procession of ducks waddled slowly across the yard and he counted them mechanically.

"Seventeen!" he exclaimed.

For the remainder of his life he nourished a feeling of resentment against these innocent fowls, which was totally unjust. Mrs. Smithers was departing, and Mrs. Wilkins accompanied her down the path.

"I kinder hate to leave 'em," said the good woman, "but I've got to go home and see after things there. I reckon them children has got the house topsy-turvy by this time."

She stepped into her carriage and took up the reins.

"To save my life I can't but remember Mr. Poole's face when they laid Anna in her grave," she remarked.

"Well," said Mrs. Wilkins, "he ought to feel bad about it, dear knows."

"I reckon," said Mrs. Smithers reflectively, "if he could have looked for'ard a bit and seen how things was a-goin' to turn out, he'd have done very different."

"Laws," said Mrs. Wilkins impatiently, "when it comes to that, if our foresight was equal to our hindsight, half the trouble in the world would never happen nohow."

The parlor door opened quietly and Josie entered, pale and languid. She put out her hand as Richard eagerly advanced towards her and motioned him away.

"I have come," she said; "it would have been much better if you had gone away, as I asked you, without seeing me, but I have come. What is it that you wish?"

"Josie," he said reproachfully, "surely you don't need ask me that. My darling, I want to be with you and share your trouble; I want to try and comfort you, and talk to you of Anna."

"Hush," she said, "don't you know I killed her?"

"No, dear, no. Don't say such things. You are not responsible for what happened, Josie. We will go away from here, and you shall never come back to this place where you have suffered so much."

"No," she said, "you will go away, but I must stay here. We have been wrong; I see it all so plainly now. I have asked you to go at once; it would have been kinder if you had done so."

"I could not believe you meant it, Josie."

"Oh, yes," she said, "I meant it. I thought I made my meaning very clear. I want you to go away at once—to-day. I want you to forget me, as I shall try to forget you."

"I will not go," he said; "you do not know what you are saying. Why, I love you, Josie, and you love me. You cannot deny it. I should not forget you any more than you would forget me. Think what it means, dearest, to us both."

Josie sat silently looking out of the window into the yard, where the offending ducks still disported themselves in the sunshine.

"Richard," she said finally, "that night—— Did you wait a long time?"

"Josie," he said, his face contracting painfully, "I—I was not there."

She stared at him incredulously.

"You were not there," she repeated, "you were not there?"

"I started and turned back. Oh my love, don't look at me like that. I could not walk the three miles, although I tried to do it. I thought you would not be able to come out, the storm was so great. I thought you would not expect me——"

"She went out," said Josie slowly, "and I let her go into the storm because I thought you would wait there until I came. She went out to save you. She is dead now, you know—and you were not there."

He wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

"Don't you suppose," he said, "that I have reproached myself ever since? Do you think I will ever cease to remember that if I had been there I might have saved her? I am tormented by that thought, Josie; night and day it pursues me. Don't make it any harder for me than it is, dear. Don't I blame myself more than you can ever blame me?"

He knelt beside her as he spoke, putting his arm around her, but she sprang to her feet and pushed him away.

"Don't touch me!" she cried, "don't come near me! I never want to see you again!"

XIV.

It is the privilege of the novelist to make flying leaps over long periods of time, and to ignore entirely intervals of months or even years. With men and women, however, these intervals must be lived, hour after hour, day after day, week after week. For them there is no merciful blank possible. They must live their lives patiently, accepting whatever joy or sorrow may be in store for them, and pursuing the monotonous round of existence, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, until at last it is all over and they reluctantly lay aside forever earthly pain and pleasure, preferring, as a rule, the well-known trials of this world to the unknown bliss of the next.

It was the first of May following the tidal wave which now occupies an important place in the annals of Delaware, and everywhere new life was springing into being. The hedges were putting forth red sprouts, preparatory to bursting into full leaf, and the fruit-trees blossomed with their promises for the coming summer; even the marshes were covered with a new growth of young green grass wherever possible.

Josie Farnaby stood in the doorway and looked about her. It was a greatly changed landscape that met her eyes, with neatly trimmed grass, well-laid walks, and flower-beds in course of preparation. Her brother was an enthusiastic young farmer, and under his jurisdiction the place had assumed quite a different aspect. His wife too was of an active, bustling disposition, and had infused into the house an air of cheerfulness to which it had long been a stranger.

She had done more than this, for she had put a little grandchild into Mrs. Farnaby's arms, hoping that the baby might appeal to her and comfort her where older and wiser heads and hearts were powerless. And it had done so. As she held the little creature in her arms

Mrs. Farnaby lived again her early married life and was insensibly cheered and comforted.

Not so Josie. As the days rolled on into weeks, and the weeks into months, the acute pain and self-reproach which had at first oppressed her were indeed softened somewhat, but in their place came a restlessness, and a longing for an indefinable something—unacknowledged, perhaps, but absorbing.

As a matter of fact, Josie was lonely; it seemed to her that she was necessary to no one. At first her mother had claimed all of her time and attention, but since the arrival of the baby she was, in a measure, set aside and unnoticed. Therefore she wasted much time in retrospection, going over and over in her mind past events, and vaguely wondering what the result would have been had she acted differently. As the spring advanced she developed a fondness for long, solitary rambles, visiting again and again places dear through association, and lingering there a long time.

To-day, however, as she stood in the door looking out on the sparkling river she was occupied with a new train of thought. Voices from the parlor floated out through the window, and she listened to them unthinkingly.

"Well," said her sister-in-law, "she certainly is a lucky girl, but she don't seem to care a bit. Why, I should have been half crazy over such a piece of good fortune at her age. It was a strange will for the old man to make, wasn't it?"

"I suppose," replied Mrs. Strong's voice, "that Mr. Poole wanted to make what reparation he could. I think he has only done what is right."

"He died there alone," said Mrs. Farnaby, "in the night, and alone."

"For that matter," said her daughter-in-law, laughing, "I think I would rather die alone than live alone, as he had done for so many years."

"I wish," said Mrs. Farnaby gently, "that someone had been with him to close his eyes, and perhaps shed a tear for him. I would like to think someone had said a prayer. I wish he had not been alone."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Strong, "he prayed himself; that would have been better still, Mrs. Farnaby."

There was a moment's silence, and then Mrs. Strong rose to take her leave, declining a pressing invitation to wait and see the baby go to bed.

"Come, walk to the gate with me, dear," she said to Josie.

"So you are a rich girl, after all," she remarked as they strolled down the lane.

"Yes," said Josie, "I believe so. It seems very strange and unreal

as yet. I want you to read this letter, Mrs. Strong. It was found in his desk addressed to me, you know."

She drew a large sheet of paper from her pocket, closely covered with cramped, old-fashioned writing. Mrs. Strong hesitated.

"Perhaps it was meant for your eyes only," she said.

"Read it, please," said Josie, "I would rather that you did."

So Mrs. Strong read it, and we, looking over her shoulder, will do the same:

"MY DEAR CHILD: For you are still a child in years, although I have done my best to make you old through suffering.

"It is not possible for us to erase any of the pages of the book of life, or I should gladly blot out what I myself have written there. Nor is it possible for man to change the nature with which he was born; I would do that also if I could.

"Of course, you know I once loved your mother; you look like her, although you will never be as pretty as she was. I am sorry for the misery I brought upon her, for it did me no good, but I do not forgive her. I never shall forgive her.

"Your father was my friend. I, myself, introduced him to your mother. I have not forgiven him either, and I do not regret that his life was unhappy, but I am sorry, very sorry, for the wretchedness which came to you through him, and to your sister also. I am sorry that through me he came to his death; I never meant to take human life. I swear it.

"You will not believe me, perhaps, when I say that in wishing to marry you I was actuated by any motive other than revenge, but I intended to make you happy if I could. However, it is no use to speak of that now.

"You were right in refusing to marry me, and I am glad you can be true to the man who loves you, and true to your promise to him. They tell me you have sent him away and that your engagement is broken. You are wrong. His happiness is at stake as well as your own, and you have no right to embitter his life in this way. Too many men become hard and callous because of a woman's whims; too many women grow old and acid from a mistaken idea of duty. Write to him to come back, and if he is worthy of you he will come gladly.

"I have left you all my property, which is considerable, hoping that you will make better use of it than I have ever done, and because I wish to repair as much as possible some of the mischief I have done. I have no kith or kin to leave it to, and if I had it would make no difference; a man can do what he likes with his own.

"It will not be long before you get the money and this letter, for I am dying. I have known it for some time, and I do not wish to die. I am afraid. I do not believe there is a God, but I do not know, and the uncertainty is unpleasant.

"There is a sealed package in my desk addressed to your mother. Give it to her and tell her——"

Here the letter stopped abruptly, and Mrs. Strong held out her hand for the other sheet.

"There is no more," said Josie; "he must have died that night. It is not dated."

"Poor old man," said Mrs. Strong,—"poor, miserable old man."

"The package addressed to mother," continued Josie, "contained an old picture of her when she was a girl and a plain gold ring—nothing more. He must have loved her very much at one time, I think. I can't help feeling sorry for him."

"Josie," said the older woman, "what he says is true. You have no right to ruin Richard Bradley's life as well as your own."

"If he had ever really loved me," said Josie, with the inconsistency of woman, "he would not have believed me. He would have known I did not want him to go away. He has forgotten all about me by this time; I have not had a word from him since he left. No doubt he is glad to forget me."

The little quiver in the girl's voice appealed to Mrs. Strong's kind heart, but she merely looked down the road at a distant black speck, which was rapidly growing larger, and remarked that she really must go home.

Josie turned to retrace her steps, and her friend walked down the road towards Red Lion, smiling to herself as though something pleased her.

The speck was now transformed into a figure, crowned at one end with a straw hat and terminating at the other in a pair of dusty boots. Mrs. Strong shook her handkerchief, and the straw hat waved in enthusiastic greeting.

"I thought you had not come," she said when within speaking distance; "I waited as long as I dared."

"The train was late," he replied, "and then Mr. Barnett insisted on a few words. I began to believe I would never get here."

"I left Josie at the gate," she remarked casually; "if you hurry you can overtake her before she reaches the house."

"I can never thank you enough for writing to me so often," he said earnestly; "you don't know what your letters have been to me. I never could have held out all this time without them."

"Go on," said Mrs. Strong, laughing; "thank me another time if you choose, when you are not quite so breathless, but don't stop now."

Josie walked slowly up the lane towards the house, but she was not yet ready to go indoors. She was lonely, very lonely, and still she did not want to be with her family, so she turned into the apple-orchard, intending to stay there until supper-time.

Such trees as had escaped the ravages of the storm were laden with

pink and white blossoms, filling the air with fragrance and dropping their petals softly now and then, as though reluctant to relinquish them. Robins called to one another as they flew from tree to tree, while in the distance the river shone, intensely blue to-night and peaceful, with small, white sails glistening in the setting sun, as little fleets of fishing-boats hurried homeward after their day's work.

Josie turned her back to the river; she had looked at it as little as possible since Anna's death. The dull, heavy thing she supposed was her heart was very troublesome just now, and the pain in it would not be overlooked or suppressed. It was there to be recognized and acknowledged; it was meant to hurt, and must fulfil its destiny. Josie's blue eyes were very wistful as she pulled a branch of the tree down to her, laying the delicate blossoms against her face as though she found them vaguely comforting.

She made a pretty picture under the flower-laden tree, or so it appeared to the dusty and travel-stained youth who advanced unnoticed through the orchard, and although he was evidently in a great hurry to get somewhere, he paused to look at it. Unfortunately, however, he stepped on a dry branch, which snapped loudly, and Josie glanced up, surprised at the sound. She looked again, unable to believe her eyes.

"Richard?" she said uncertainly, "Richard?"

"I have come back, Josie," he said. "Have you anything to say to me?"

The branch of the apple-tree swung rapidly back into its accustomed place, for both of Josie's hands were otherwise engaged, and there was nothing to hold it down.



OPPORTUNITY

BY BLANCHE TRENNOR HEATH

"I HAVE no skill to lead," he cried,
"But see, the breach within the wall!"
He grasped a bugle at his side
And blew a battle-call.

They followed where the bugle rang;
They smote the crumbling wall to ground—
Foremost within the breach he sprang,
The man the hour had found!

A ROYAL INTERVIEW WITH ITALY'S QUEEN

By *Maud Howe*

Author of "A Newport Aquarelle," "The San Rosario Ranch," etc.



PALAZZO RUSTICUCCI, ROME, December 7, 1894.

YESTERDAY was *sirocco*. In consequence the house was full of fine sand blown up from the African desert and everybody was out of humor. In spite of *sirocco*, I saw the King and Queen going to open Parliament. The King, Prince of Naples, and two officers were in the first crystal and gilt coach, the Queen, her mother, the Duchess of Genoa, and a gentleman of the court in the next. The horses, trappings, coachmen, and footmen were magnificent. There were three servants to each of the six royal carriages—one on the box, two standing behind. They wore scarlet coats, white wigs, three-cornered hats, and pink silk stockings. The King and the Prince were in uniform, the Queen and her mother in the last French fashion. Little Guenny Story (the granddaughter of our dear old friends the William Storys) was dreadfully disappointed when she found that the Queen did not always wear a crown. I sympathize with her. I had a place in the loggia of the Palazzo Montecitorio, where Parliament meets, and saw the royalties step out of their carriages and enter the palace.

January 21, 1895.

Yesterday I went to the annual memorial mass for Victor Emmanuel at the Pantheon. The noble old temple—the only one of the Roman buildings which has been in continuous use since it was erected in the first century—was hung with black and cloth of gold. A huge catafalque stood in the middle, directly under the open dome; the whole interior was lighted by classic torches, urns and tripods holding blue fire. A tribune had been constructed for the orchestra and singers. The music, a mass of Cherubini's, was very fine. The catafalque was surrounded by a double line of men who stood facing one another through the long service. The men of the outer circle were soldiers of the King, the men of the inner ring were priests of the Church, for Victor Emmanuel was a good Catholic and died in the faith.

I was in Rome for the first time in 1878, the last winter of his life. I often saw him driving on the Pincio or in the Corso. He was an

extraordinary looking man, fierce, powerful, bizarre, every inch a king; loved and hated accordingly. I remember the intense excitement when the two old enemies, Pius the Ninth and Victor Emmanuel, both lay dying in the city for which they had fought. Would the King be permitted to receive the Sacrament? When it was known that the Pope on his death-bed had sent his blessing to the King *in extremis* all Rome drew a long breath. We went to see *Il Re Galantuomo* lying in state in the *capella ardente* at the Quirinal. He was dressed in full uniform with high riding-boots, the royal robe of red velvet and ermine was spread over the inclined plane on which he lay, the crown and sceptre at his feet. The chapel blazed with candles; in each of the four corners knelt a brown Capuchin monk telling his beads. Signor Simone Peruzzi, chamberlain to the King, watched one night beside the body. He was alone for the moment when he heard a deep sigh, saw the King's breast heave. The matter was explained by the physicians afterwards. I remember to this day the thrill in Peruzzi's voice when he spoke of the dead King's sigh.

March 10, 1895.

Mrs. Potter Palmer and I have had a private audience with the Queen. The visit went off very well. We arrived at the Quirinal Palace at two o'clock, and were received by the Marchesa Villamarina and two other court ladies, with whom we talked for perhaps ten minutes. A tiny old woman dressed in mourning, looking like the Fairy Blackstick, came out from her audience just as we entered the Queen's reception-room for ours. She must have been a privileged person, for we had been warned not to wear black and not to wear hats, bonnets being *de rigueur*. As I do not own a bonnet, Mrs. Palmer kindly lent me a charming one, fresh from Paris—a few days later, when she was received by the Pope, she wore my Spanish mantilla. The Queen, who was seated on a sofa, rose as we entered and shook hands cordially with us. She is still beautiful, her hair magnificent, her eyes kind and keen. When you visit royalty you must only speak when you are spoken to; the choice of the topic of conversation thus remains with the royal personage. You must always say "your Majesty," and you must make three reverences on entering and on leaving the presence. In all this I was tutored by Marion Crawford, who has often been "received," and whose books the Queen is said to read with pleasure. She speaks English perfectly, by the way. She had seen an article in a late magazine—*Scribner's*, I think—on American country houses; she spoke of those at Newport, said that, "judging from the illustrations, they must be very fine." She showed us a grand piano at the end of the room, saying that it was an American instrument, a Steinway, and that "it had a very brilliant action." With Mrs. Palmer the Queen spoke of the World's Fair. Mr. MacVeagh had pre-

sented her with a copy of the book I edited on the Woman's Department of the Chicago Exposition. The audience lasted about twenty minutes; then the Queen rose, the signal for us to withdraw. We made our three courtesies and backed successfully from the room. The Queen is much beloved; she has real charm, besides being good and clever.

ST. AGNELLO DI SORRENTO, March 18, 1895.

Last Monday we left Rome in a rain-storm and came here to break up obstinate colds. We are delightfully established at the Cocumella, an old Jesuit monastery turned into a hotel. There is less of the odor of sanctity—a peculiar mildewed smell the monks leave behind them—than is usual in such places. Our windows command an astonishing view of the Bay of Naples and Mt. Vesuvius. To the right, about a quarter of a mile away, is Villa Crawford, where we are most kindly welcomed by the ladies; the man of the house is away. The children are charming; the villa ideal; it stands on the edge of a high cliff leaning over the sea. The grounds, filled with flowers and fruit-trees, are seamed with quaintly paved walks. On the left of the house is a terrace, where they dine in summer. Here a flaming heart in gray and white paving-stones took my fancy. The house is large and luxurious.

To-day is Palm Sunday. The chambermaid who brings my morning coffee brought me a bit of olive-branch, instead of palm, from early service. Later we went to high mass at the cathedral in Sorrento. The procession was headed by the Bishop, his acolytes, and some smart young canons in rose-colored satin capes. After the mass the procession marched through the town led by a group of bronzed fishermen and boys dressed in white robes, with bright blue *moire* capes, and loose oriental white hoods over their heads. They all carried yellow palm-branches in their hands. It was the most perfect contrast of color imaginable.

Yesterday I saw the nets hauled in. The men and women, old and young, form a line upon the beach, take hold upon the rope, and with a graceful, swinging motion pull in the seine inch by inch, as they did in the days of St. Peter. The Sorrentines are a handsome and seem a kindly people; there are comparatively few beggars here.

Throughout the *Piano* (plain) *di Sorrento* thousands are employed in the manufacture of silk stockings, scarves, carved and inlaid wood, coral ornaments, tortoise-shell combs, and jewelry. I dare not enter a shop for fear of temptation. The Italian spoken is far pleasanter than the nasal Neapolitan; the chief peculiarity is the dropping of the final vowel. Maria, the dark-eyed chambermaid, asks if she shall make the *lett*, for *letto* (bed), and speaks of Sorrent, doman,

and Sabad, meaning Sorrento, *domani* (to-morrow), and *Sabado* (Saturday).

The trees in the garden are laden with oranges and lemons, the roses are beginning, the birds are singing. The service of the hotel is excellent, table good, room with fireplace and afternoon sun; for all this, pension and wine included, we pay six francs—one dollar and twenty cents—a day, with permission to roam in the garden and pick as many oranges as we like. I am reminded of Hugh Norman's saying, "When I have only a dollar and a half a day left to live on, I shall retire to the Cocumella and pass the rest of my life there." We have *uve secce* for luncheon, grapes dipped in wine and spices, rolled up with bits of citron in grape-leaves, tied in little bundles, and roasted. They may be kept half the year, and are among the dainties of the world. The miniature Italian Count who married Mrs. Tom Thumb, *veuve*, said when he came to take tea at our house, "*In Italia se mangia bene*" ("In Italy one eats well"). He was right; we hear less about Italian than about French cookery, but it is quite as good—the range of dishes is wider—and shows more imagination. There is a great deal about cooking in my letters; so there is in life. Fire, cookery, and civilization seem to be inseparable. Speaking of fire, the women about here say that Vesuvius, across the Bay there, sets a bad example smoking his eternal pipe. The men sit watching him, presently they imitate him, try and see how big a cloud of smoke they can make.

Vesuvius dominates the whole landscape. He finally got the better of us, drew us like a magnet; so, finding that the ascent can be made from here as well as anywhere, we gave a day to it. The road, an ascending spiral, embraces the great black mountain like the coils of a serpent. At first it leads through pleasant vineyards; when these are left behind the dreadful lava fields begin. The weird forms of the petrified rivers of lava, once red and molten, now grim and black, suggest human bodies writhing in the clutch of horrid monsters. Here a huge trunk madly wrenches itself from the toils, there a vast body lies supine and agonized, the last resistance passed. When we left our carriage at the foot of the funicular railroad I felt I had passed through several circles of the Inferno. Dante must have received many of the impressions he transmits to us from Vesuvius. At the summit, when I looked down into the crater, at the slippery, slimy sides, with their velvet bloom of sulphur, I saw where the fathers of the Church and the early painters, Fra Angelico among them, got their ideas of hell. Marcus Aurelius, my guide, bibulous, muscular, with a grip of iron, found a point from which, when the wind lifted the veil of thick white smoke, I could, by leaning well over the crater, see the flood at the bottom surge, seethe, toss up from its depth big, red-hot stones, which dropped back again while the mountain roared and scolded. It was an

awesome day. Vesuvius has given me not only a new understanding of the poetry and religion of Italy, but of the Italian character, which it has had a share in forming. On our way down we ran over a soldier, the front wheel of our carriage passing across his leg. We were three people; it must have hurt him, but he got up and walked off cursing us vehemently. I wish the Abyssinians might find the Italian soldiers equally invincible in Africa.

ST. AGNELLO DI SORRENTO, Easter Sunday, 1895.

I find the services of Holy Week more impressive here than in Rome. Thursday afternoon, on a lonely road by the sea, we heard a strange, primitive chanting,—the music might have been Palestrina's,—and came suddenly upon a procession led by children carrying the usual emblems of the Passion, and some I have never seen before. The story of the betrayal and the crucifixion was told by symbols, the basin of Pilate, the cock and sword of Peter, the bag of Judas, the scourge, the pillar, the spear, the sponge, the cross, the crown of thorns, and the winding-sheet. The washing of the apostles' feet at the cathedral Holy Thursday was really moving. A dozen poor old fishermen, scrubbed as clean as possible, represented the twelve; they were each rewarded by a loaf of bread and a franc at the end of the service. Early Good Friday morning, before the sun was up, a band of peasants passed through the town bearing a life-sized image of the Madonna dressed all in white going out to look for her son. After sundown they returned, bringing back the mother from her search, clad in mourning. She had found her son; behind her the figure of the dead Christ was carried on a bier. The people stood gravely watching the bearers as they passed through the dark, torch-lit streets. On Saturday, as we were driving, a cannon sounded at twelve o'clock in token of the resurrection. Our driver threw himself from the cab and, touching his head to the ground three times, remained kneeling long enough to repeat several *aves*.

PALAZZO RUSTICUCCI, ROME, March 27, 1895.

We were glad to get back to Rome, to the terrace. Wall-flowers are out, daffodils, pansies, primroses, forget-me-nots, and lilies-of-the-valley. Two large lilac-bushes and three spiræa will be in bloom by Sunday. There is snow on Leonessa; it is a trifle chilly up here on the terrace where I write, but it is near "peaks and stars" and very near peace. I weed the flowers, collect the snails that prey upon our pansies and threaten our roses. The awful gardens where Nero's living torches flamed lay just below my windows, where the Piazza of St. Peter's now is. Soracte, Leonessa, with all the rest of the purple Alban hills looked down on that sight as calmly as they look on my lilies and me. There is no place in the world where one feels as small as in Rome. The sunflowers come up, each with his little

burst shell of seed on his head, which he soon throws away; so the lesson of the new life springing from the old is studied in the shadow of Angelo's dome. The great church greeted me like a friend. Tourists criticise the architecture: I do not deny faults, I only do not see them. We have a nightingale of our own at last. His name is Pan. He sings gloriously. What a thrill his voice has! We feed him on bullock's heart. Jeremy Bentham, the tortoise, knew me; he never was so friendly before; snaps fresh lettuce-leaves out of my hand without trying to nip my fingers. Our great Thomas cat threatened Pan, and my life was a constant struggle to keep them apart, so I have sent Pan to the studio, where J. has a falcon and two pigeons. He threatens to buy a jackdaw, and was with difficulty restrained from purchasing a baby fox. It was such an engaging little animal that I confess to have wanted it myself. The happy family at the studio is cared for by Vincenzo, a young painter, a scholar of J.'s. In the old days, when J. was a pupil of Villegas, Vincenzo was the studio boy who washed their brushes. J. thinks he has some talent and has given him a whole floor in his great barrack of a studio.

Pompilia and Philamena had swept and garnished the house with flowers in honor of our return. All our friends and our small world of hangers-on (the ancient Romans called them clients) welcomed us kindly, with the single exception of the porter.

Porters seem to be natural enemies, like mothers-in-law. We all know shining exceptions, but the rule commonly holds good of both. None of our friends are on speaking terms with their porters. Our old porter was dreadful—dirty, drunk, disreputable. At first the new one seemed a treasure. J. had recommended him for the place chiefly on account of his lovely tenor voice. The man—we call him Ernesto “because it is his name”—used to sit at work (he is a mender of leather) on the sidewalk opposite the studio singing airs from the latest operas, *Bohème*, *Pagliacci*, *Iris*, but singing them like an artist. It helped J., shut up at his work in the big studio, to hear him, and in a reckless moment he spoke to Signor Mazzocchi about the singing saddler. Behold him installed with his big, white-haired wife, Maria, his little daughter, Lucrezia, brown and bonnie, in a grim room without light or air (you would not put a cat in such a hole)—still, an improvement on their former quarters. The landlord is responsible for the porter's wages. We give him a *mancia* of ten francs a month, extras for extra service, and a present at Christmas and at Easter. His duty towards us is to receive our cards and letters and bring them up the three long flights of stairs. Our mail grew staler and staler. The Paris New York *Herald* (read by all Americans in Europe), instead of being served with breakfast, arrived barely in time for luncheon. J. had built on the first landing a little open stall, light and airy, where

Ernesto could stitch his old saddles and harnesses and sing his jolly songs. Alas and alas! there is a wine-shop opposite the palace, there is a *trattoria* on the ground floor next the baker's; both proprietors are generous and soft-hearted. Somehow the fat wife, the slim daughter, are fed, but Ernesto stitches no longer, sings no more. Sober and poor, a rival to Pan. Rich and drunk, he is sourly silent. It is a dangerous thing to play at being providence! The *postino* now brings up the mail and delivers it at our door, *ultimo piano* (top floor).

February, 1896.

Last week I took Isabel to a ball at the Princess del Drago's. We have kept Ernesto up a good deal lately, so I took the key of the big *portone* and told him that he need not wait. Isabel's maid, Franceline, was to sit up and open the old green door, the key of which weighs two pounds and will not go into my pocket. We wore our very best gowns and trinkets, and Isabel had a pretty tinsel ribbon in her hair which sparkled like diamonds. It was a great dance; the drive home at three in the morning under a full silver moon, past Hilda's tower, the fountain of the Triton, and the hospital of Santo Spirito was not the least of the fun. We met a few empty cabs returning to their stables, just as we entered the Borgo Nuovo passed a pair of grave *carabinieri* (military police) pacing their beat, wrapped in long black cloaks, their three-cornered hats drawn over their eyes. Our good coachman, Cesar, opened the *portone*, found and lighted the candle left on the lower step as had been arranged, and bade us good-night. We picked up our skirts and went up the two easy flights chattering about the party. At the second landing we stopped beside the Etruscan ladies to rest before breasting the third short, steep flight. I rang softly, not to disturb the sleepers, and waited. I rang loudly, and waited. Through the door came a gentle, familiar murmur. Then the cracked bell rang out a tocsin that should have roused the whole palace; still no sound from within save that rhythmical murmur; we beat and kicked upon the door till hands and feet were tired; we called, bellowed, screamed, shrieked for a matter of five minutes, until the terrified Franceline, guilty yet denying sleep, threw open the door. I was just dropping off into dreamland when I heard the *portone* shut heavily. As the stairway belongs exclusively to us, I sat up and listened. There was a hubbub on the stairs. I heard Ernesto's voice protesting, calling upon the Trinity first as a whole, then severally, upon all the saints, last and loudest upon the Madonna, to witness his innocence. A stern, accusing voice drowned Ernesto's. I threw on a wrapper, ran to the door, and listened. "Where are they, then? Make me to see them, those ladies, all festive with jewels. Did we not ourselves behold them enter this *portone*,

laughing and talking? this *portone*, brute breast, of which one knows that thou, and thou only, hast the key. Did we not hear, we out in the street, feminine yells horrible, to make one tremble, and thou sayest thou heardest nothing? Animal, where are they, then? What have you done with them, those ladies so bright, so beautiful? Robbed, murdered, dying, perhaps—possibly dead.”

“By the mass, by Peter and Paul, I was asleep in my bed at ten o'clock. Ask Maria, ask Lucrezia, ask the *padrons* of the wine-shop, who turned me out at that hour. I knew nothing till you came, *illustriissimi*, you tore me from my bed. What do I know of the ladies? I saw them go at quarter before eleven with Cesare in a coupé. Is it sensible to ask me? Ask that fat pig, Cesare. If they are dead, he is responsible.”

“Might it not be well to ring the bell and ask the Signore?” said a third voice, that of the elder *carabiniere*. Explanations, apologies, thanks, “*e buona notte!*”

February 4, 1897.

The ball at the embassy last night (given by Mr. MacVeagh, the retiring Ambassador, for the King and Queen) went off very well. Her Majesty looked charming and danced the quadrille with great spirit. Some of the dancers forgot the figures, she put them all straight, was so winning and fascinating that the Americans were enthusiastic about her.

The King, who does not dance, seemed bored. He is first and above all else a soldier, a man of action. I watched him as he stood pulling his big mustache, talking to an ancient ambassadress; by his expression it was easy to see he would be glad when it was over and time to go home. He was in uniform as usual, carrying his white-plumed helmet under his arm. His honest face had that puzzled look it so often wears; no wonder! Of all the monarchs in the world, his riddles are the hardest to read. The Queen wore a superb dress of pale blue satin with point lace and her famous pearls. The King gave her a string of pearls on each anniversary of their marriage, it is said, till at their silver wedding she protested she could not bear the weight of another rope. The finest jewels after the royal pearls were Mrs. Potter Palmer's. She wore the crown of pearls and diamonds I remember her wearing at her reception for the Spanish Infanta Eulalia at the time of the World's Fair at Chicago. The supper was served in an immense room, the handsomest in the apartment, which occupies the *piano nobile* of the Palazzo Ludovisi. Nothing could be better arranged for entertaining in the grand manner than the present American Embassy. You enter an enormous antechamber, where the servants take your wraps, pass on through a second waiting-room into a long corridor which runs the whole length

of the palace. The state rooms all lead from this corridor; they have communicating doors, so that standing in the doorway of the supper-room one looks through the two drawing-rooms to the ballroom, where on a stage the musicians are seated. The diplomats all wore court dress. A ball where the men as well as the women are splendid is naturally far more brilliant than one of our balls, where the girls monopolize the finery. The most striking figure there was a Russian in the dress of a Cossack colonel, cartridge belt, jewelled weapons, and all, and—as if to heighten the warlike look—a black patch over one eye.

I never saw such a crowd around a supper-table. Refreshments at most entertainments here are simpler than would be believed at home. In this the Italians are more civilized than the English or ourselves. The supper last night was of the generous American order. The Romans seemed to enjoy it and did not limit themselves to biscuits and lemonade. The army officers in especial took kindly to the good things.

To-day I looked into St. Agostino and saw the beautiful miracle-working Madonna. She is a lovely marble woman with a less lovely *bambino*. The mother is literally covered with gems; she has strings and strings of pearls about her neck, her fingers are laden to the very tips with rings; the child is hung with scores of watches. Both heads are deformed with ugly crowns. The Madonna is by Jacopo Sansovino, a Florentine sculptor of the fifteenth century. She is much adored and quite adorable. She is very rich, has a good income of her own from the various legacies she has received. On the pedestal below her silver foot—the marble one was long since kissed out of existence—an inscription states that “on the assurance of Pius the Seventh an indulgence of two hundred days will be granted to whoever shall devoutly touch the foot of this holy image and recite an ave.”

I also went to see the Sala Borgia, newly opened at the Vatican. It contains one of the most splendid pieces of decoration I have ever seen—three rooms painted by Pinturicchio; they have been closed for twenty years, having been used as libraries; the walls were covered with books. Artistic Rome has gone mad about them. They surpass everything in the way of decoration here save the Sistine Chapel and the Stanze of Raphael.

June 29 and 30, 1897.

To-night the Feast of St. Peter is to be celebrated by a dinner-party on the terrace. That old statue of Jupiter across the way, or whoever it used to be called before it was held venerable as a portrait of St. Peter, is dressed in his best vestments, his finest tiara, wears his most sumptuous sapphire ring on his stiff forefinger. The whole Borgo is under the protection of St. Peter, and I always make a little feast on his day. There are many sermons preached about him; I heard an excellent one in a neighboring church. The object of the saints' days is to keep alive the memory of noble lives. Just as on

Washington's Birthday the old stories of Valley Forge and Yorktown are recited year after year, so the story of Peter is told on the 29th of June every year. I was surprised to hear Signor Rudolfo Lanciani say he thought it possible St. Peter had actually been in Rome, that the great church may cover his last resting-place as well as perpetuate his name.

Ripe figs are supposed to be eaten first on St. John's Day, the 25th of June. Tradition says that the first plate of figs was always presented on that day to Pope Pius the Ninth. Either figs are late this season, or Pompilia has been slow about finding them, for the purple figs which were served with cold boiled ham for our luncheon to-day are the first we have seen this season. Naturally there was no second course to such a superlative first. The terrace dinner was a great success. The table was set under the *pergola* covered thick with the second crop of roses. We hung *lucerne* (brass lamps for burning olive oil) from the yellow canes of the crossed bamboos and lighted the farther end of our airy dining-room with colored lanterns. Among the guests were Monsignor William O'Connell, director of the American College, a genial Irish-American priest, and Dr. William Bull, physician to the American Embassy, guide, philosopher, and friend of all wandering Americans. He is beloved of artists, a collector of antiquities, a genial not a melancholy Dane, a wise physician, and one of the most picturesque figures in our Roman world. The sun was still staining the sky when we sat down. By the time old Nena brought the ices from the *trattoria* below, the full yellow moon came up over the Sabine Hills, flooding every corner with its yellow light. Below, in the baker's shop, the nightingale sang to the roses. Our best rose, *il Capitano Christi*, is a very large, flat, pink rose, growing on a stiff stalk with long, fierce thorns. It opens wide as a saucer, and is of the most rapturous, tender color. It is grafted on an excellent common-place red rose-tree, a generous and prolific bloomer, which yields a brave harvest, the first to blossom, the last to wither, always to be depended on if I want roses in a hurry. The Captain gives a rare rose, never more than one at a time, but I know that it is to the Captain's rose that the baker's nightingale sings.



QUÆRITUR

BY MARY TERESA WAGGAMAN

HEIGHO! Here's Wisdom's coffer
 All gorged with gain—
 To open who dares offer?
 Its key is Pain!

THE GIRL WITH THE BANJO

By Jean D. Hallowell



WHEN you go to a house party your relationship to your hostess is pretty closely defined by the type of room assigned for your occupancy. If you are a stranger, you are given the state chambers with ornate furniture, linen sheets, and a private bath. If you are a casual acquaintance, you may yet hope for a second-story room with the usual quota of modern improvements. If you are a real friend, you must content yourself with a third-story,—back or front,—and if you are a relative,—Heaven help you!—you may consider yourself lucky to be tucked away in a Morris chair in the sewing-room.

When Mrs. Dana gave the house party of which I write I congratulated myself on a formal kind of intimacy which would at least warrant me in expecting a third-story front. I mean never to get so intimate as a third-story back with a movable washstand, but I am an inveterate house-party girl, and when one goes to a dozen or fifteen house parties a year it is pretty hard sometimes in the general excitement not to drift perilously near to pet names and Morris chairs.

Anyone who is familiar with successful house parties knows perfectly well that people are invited solely as types—never as individuals. Believe me, then, I mean no personal egotism when I affirm that I am in great demand at house parties—not because I am beautiful or brilliant or diplomatic, but simply and solely because, in house-party parlance, I am, or rather represent, a *b-a-n-j-o*. Banjo-playing is my one accomplishment. I can play the banjo like—well, “like the devil.” The quotation is not my own.

When the people in my set give house parties they invite only people with tricks. That is the secret of a successful house party. Every guest must be a social specialist. If you want to be in popular demand at house parties, you must be a writer or an actor or a missionary or *something*. You must have a trick of speech or a trick of silence, a trick of ingenuousness or a trick of cynicism, or, best of all, a trick of flirting. Now, banjo-playing is in a way a trivial thing, and yet it is a trick that may at times out-trick all others with its wilful, subtle, saucy interruptiveness. The banjo never has a legitimate chance of its own, but it is always making or unmaking chances

for others. That is why I am in such demand at house parties. I am a very present help in times of trouble; I have saved more than one mismanaged dinner; I have rallied more than one disgruntled guest; I have beguiled more than one *Enfant Terrible*; I have bombarded more than one undesirable *tête-à-tête*; I have covered up more than one attack of Bacchanalian hiccoughs. But, believe me, I take no credit for myself. My banjo is a *witch*. Of course, my invitations always read, "You and your banjo," but I should like the frankness better if the phraseology were reversed, for I am just an insignificant slip of a thing with a little brown face like a witch-gypsy's, and a nature—oh, bother!—a nature all claws and purrs, like a kitty.

When Mrs. Dana's invitation came to this particular house party I accepted with alacrity, for, in the first place, Mrs. Dana's house parties are often very amusing, and, in the second place, I happened to have some distractingly pretty gowns which were just pining to be worn. So, banjo in one hand, dress-suit case in the other, with trunk to follow, I presented myself at the appointed time.

It was my third visit at Mrs. Dana's, and I was fighting down my natural greeting of intimate affection with the absolute assurance of following the neat maid-servant up to the third-story front, when Mrs. Dana rushed out of the library and kissed me with startling effusiveness on both cheeks. I chilled at once with a horrible suspicion. "Oh my dear child!" gasped my hostess with disheartening intimacy, "I am so distressed, but I have got to ask a *great* favor of you. I had planned to give you the pink-rose room on the third floor,—the front one, you know, with the long cheval mirror,—but I have just had the most unexpected letter from Bishop Barrows and his wife; they have reconsidered their declination and decided to come after all, so, *dear child*, will you ever forgive me,"—here Mrs. Dana fairly took me in her hysterical arms while visions of Morris chairs flitted in green velour before my staring eyes,—“so, dear child, I have got to ask you to take Billy's room, and it hasn't been fixed up or dusted or *anything*, no one has ever slept in it since Billy died”—and then Mrs. Dana's china-blue eyes softened suddenly with real tears, so that I said instantly, in a muffled, clothly voice against her shoulder, "Why, my dear, I'd just as soon have Billy's room as not, and don't you worry a bit about dust or anything; I'll be happy as a princess anywhere there is a bed."

"Oh, there's bed enough in Billy's room," Mrs. Dana vouchsafed with suddenly renewed cheerfulness, "but nobody's had time to do anything; the maids are in a perfect panic over their extra preparations, and—I can't bear to go near the room since Billy died, even if I had a moment to spare. Mary will show you the way up. Oh my *dear* child, will you ever forgive me?"

So, gathering up my ruffled skirts and tugging at my banjo, I followed Mary and the suit-case up the broad staircase, past the state chambers, up the gradually narrowing climb past the pink-rose room, up the winding, dark, top-story stairs, realizing grimly that I who had balked at the callow, wholesome comfort of a Morris chair was about to be consigned to the family mausoleum. Pleasant thought!

When we reached Billy's room the door was locked. I had never heard of Billy before, but I had ample time to soliloquize concerning his probable age, death, and general attainments while Mary fumbled with the door-key, grunting discordantly over the difficulty of her task. Then at last the door opened and Mary tottered in ahead with the suit-case and opened the shutters, lit the gas, felt of the bed, blew at the dust on the mantelpiece, and scurried downstairs again to answer her mistress's frantic ring for assistance.

I shut the door behind her, and locked it and bolted it. There was a dusty, mussy fire laid in the grate, and I put a match to it and sent it roaring up the chimney in cheerful, yellow waves. Out of the blaze came a vague, elusive memory of cigarettes. "There is a man in this room," I said, "I smell him." Then—I am more afraid of dead people than of anything else in the world—I looked under the bed and in the closet and behind the bureau. But there was no harm anywhere, only that awful, creepy, ghostly chill that does not have to conform to thermometers. I cried a little, and I laughed quite a little, and I stood sick-heartedly and surveyed the room. And I wondered and I wondered.

I am no Sherlock Holmes, but it did not take me long to conclude that whoever Billy was, he was no innocent babe who had died in his cooing infancy.

It was a very human-looking room, radiantly, gorgeously, *flauntingly* alive, from the crimson paper on the walls to the tarnished glitter of some German favor on the mantel; a big, rambling attic room, fairly reeking with color and whim and temperament, crowded with books and pictures and cluttered with rods and guns,—altogether, just the sort of a den that a man named Billy would have made for himself in the faraway top of his mother's Boston house. It was a dear room, every inch of it fairly *screaming* life at you. But Billy himself was quite dead, and the dust lay sneezing-deep over all his treasures.

After due deliberation I went over and sat on Billy's great four-poster bed and curled my feet up safe away from the grab-ghosts that are liable to lurk under strange beds, and then and there I made a solemn compact with the Dead.

"Billy," I whispered, "I don't know who you are nor why you are dead, but if I am going to live in your room for seven long, spooky, black nights, *you must not come back to bother me*. I'm not accus-

tomed to sharing my room with anyone. I took your den just to accommodate your mother, and the accommodation is a very unpleasant experience indeed for me. Now I will dust your room and I will keep a bright fire going and I will be kind to your things, *but you must not come back to bother me*. I want that distinctly understood."

Then I laughed aloud, because it was a silly thing to make a solemn compact with the dead, and I picked up my banjo to play some jolly tra-la-la thing, but two strings snapped deliberately in my hands. My fingers were horribly cold.

Billy's room was certainly very dusty, and just to show that I dared I went and wrote my name—"Jocynl, Jocynl, Jocynl"—all over the top of the mantelpiece and the desk and the bureau. But that wasn't enough, so I climbed up in a chair and punched a cloud of dust and feathers out of the great fat stomach of a stuffed sea-gull. But even that did not completely rally my retreating spirits.

It was an awful-looking room to come back to alone at bedtime, so I decided all at once that it would be wiser to begin my explorations and repairs in the early, safe time of that present moment. There were no towels in the rack to help my first housewifely instinct, but Billy's room was so immediately—so insistently—dusty that I rummaged in my dress-suit case for material. There was nothing there to help me but my best little lace petticoat. Now, I have a weakness for lace petticoats, but Billy's room must be dusted at once—hadn't I promised? So I took my little skirt, albeit wryly, and swished it round over the tops of bookcases and tables and across the faces of pictures that really—needed petticoats very badly indeed.

"And, Billy," I said, trying to break the hideous dusty silence,—
"Billy, did you ever have your room dusted before with a soney little lace petticoat?" But Billy did not answer, for how could he? Billy was dead, and had promised not to come back, and probably couldn't come back anyway, for, judging from appearances, Billy was without doubt a lost soul.

Thus it was that I, Jocynl Merrill, social butterfly and banjo dilettante, organized myself by emergency into a Board of Health and a Code of Morals, and became the most intimate possible confidante of a dead man whom I had never seen. And then and there I resolved that never again as long as I lived should anyone but myself dust my room at home, though, goodness knows, *my* pictures would not quicken a turtle nor *my* books disgrace a family Christmas-tree.

There was nothing exactly vulgar about Billy's bohemianism, but yet his zest for beauty and wonder would have broken my heart if he had been *my* Billy. He had a hurricane sort of nature, I guess, and I suppose a boy with storms like that in him has really *got* to be shipwrecked, and then it's hit or miss whether the Captain or the Stoker finally gets to shore.

But I didn't have time to soliloquize very long, for I was a sight to behold by that time, and when the dressing-bell rang I had to hurry like everything to get hot water and towels, and dress myself and tune my banjo. And then at the last second, when I ran back to get a scarf out of the closet, I found a pair of red slippers,—Billy's slippers, I suppose,—and just because they felt so chilled and scary I took them out and put them by the fire, and as I turned round on the threshold to view my cheerful work,—the bright room, the roaring blaze, the big chair, and the red slippers,—“Humph,” I thought, “it looks more like a homecoming than a memorial,” and my cheeks burned with the irreverence or something of the suggestion.

My gown was a pretty, rose-colored thing, but it slunk in hatefully round my knees for lack of my best petticoat,—my trunk had not come,—and I was bad-tempered and uncomfortable when I reached the drawing-room and found the whole company assembled and waiting for me.

We filed out to the dining-room with the awful ceremony that invariably characterizes first dinners, but we got through the pompous meal somehow, and after the coffee in the drawing-room, when the air was blue with smoke, Mrs. Dana began with provoking promptness,—

“Now, my dear, won't you play us a few jolly tunes on that wonderful little banjo of yours?”

So I played a few little tunes, but they were not jolly, for my banjo was sulky and whined and whimpered and mourned. Now a complaining banjo is the most God-forsaken sound in the world, for a banjo is at most a brawling roisterer, and its occasional fits of repentance are as stridently crude and shrill as a street-gamin's hymn-tunes. Yet people go daft over my banjo when it mourns, for there is something about the incongruity of its mood that tears your heart out.

We were a mixed company that evening. There was a white muslin ingénue flirting rather starchily with a college professor; there was a lolling young emotional actress who took house parties hygienically, as most people take sanitariums; there were two college women trying to interest a Cuban War hero in settlement work; there was a young Englishman who was over here studying American politics; there was the Bishop's wife, who was interested in the negro question, and there was the Bishop, who was interested in me. I do not mean romantically interested, exactly, for the Bishop had never seen me before, but ecclesiastically impressed, as with a new and alluring kind of heathen.

It was not a very interesting evening. The first evening at a house party never is. Everybody wishes that he hadn't come, and the subsequent success or failure of a party depends on whether that original opinion is justified or not.

We were a mixed company, as you see, but Mrs. Dana always prided

herself on her mixed companies and the ensuing brilliancy thereof. There is a certain amount of truth in her theory too, for people who like each other very much are apt to be a bit maudlin conversationally.

When I first began to play the Bishop yawned slothfully behind his fat fingers, and watched me with the good-natured tolerance which churchmen are apt to bestow on young society people of a different denomination. But with my second whimpering, insouciant melody the Bishop sat up uneasily, and when I finished playing with a curious, childish, treble attempt at an anthem, the Bishop rose and came over and sat down beside me and quizzed me with a personal urbanity that was startling.

"You have a wonderful gift," he volunteered in a massive whisper, "but why profane it over such a frivolous instrument as a banjo? You should be playing the organ in God's sanctuary."

"In God's sanctuary?" I queried, with the only real ingenuous look I have saved over from my débutante days,—"*in God's sanctuary?*" and I snatched up my banjo and began playing the wildest, rowdiest jig-time you ever heard in your life, and the ingénue got up and began to cavort around the room, with the English politician after her, and the college women beat time with their common-sense heels, and the Bishop's wife began to wave her picture of Booker Washington to and fro, and the Bishop—I vow you could hear the Bishop's heart pounding like a Junebug at a prayer-meeting. When you really come to think of it, banjo-playing must be a bit chaotic to a man who has lived on nothing less pompous than a triple-keyboard pipe organ.

Then came the applause. I am not a very pretty young person, and I would like, of course, to be stunningly beautiful, so that men fell dead on the street when I went by, but I would gladly forego my wildest dream of beauty for that one illuminated second at dinner-party, picnic, or even church fair, when *I am recognized*. That second of recognition is my soul's elixir. I could have moved mountains when the ingénue came and perched on the arm of my chair and rubbed her cheek against mine—ingénues are usually such blasé little people.

Then my conscience smote me about the Bishop, and I smiled at him the mildest evangelical smile I could imagine, and begged him to take me out in the hall to get a breath of air, where I explained to him that I wasn't really profaning my gift at all, because the banjo is the only thing in the world that I can play, and that a gypsy told me once that I was cursed—or blessed—with the ability to bring out the worst in good people and the best in bad people. The Bishop, however, could not affirm this prophecy, as affirmation of either clause would be equally damning to his own character. The gypsy told me also to be careful when I chose a husband, as I should drive a good man bad, but could turn a devil into a saint. Well, there you have it with

my music: I can make a banjo sing like a whimsical heavenly choir, but I make a church organ sound as though it were drunk. So what should I do with a man? How long would he stay good—or bad—in my hands? The Bishop did not volunteer to solve my perplexity, but he never left my side for the entire evening.

When we sang college songs, when we discussed philanthropy, when we admired Mrs. Dana's curios, the Bishop remained steadfastly in my train, and just before bedtime, when we were all seated around the fire,—the Bishop and I perceptibly on the outer edge of the circle,—I bristled up courage and whispered to him, "Who was Billy Dana?"

"Billy Dana?" mused the Bishop. "Why, Billy Dana was Mrs. Dana's only son, and a sad young scamp too, if rumor speaks the truth. He began running away as soon as he could walk, and the last time he ran, he ran once too often, for he enlisted in the army, went to the Philippines, and was killed, as served him right, in some inexcusably daredevil racket with the natives. He was a bad young man," gloated the Bishop, "and I only hope he repented at the last. It was a terrible ending, and should have startled the other young men of his set into paths of righteousness. His mother has erected a superb memorial window to him at St. Francis's, and has endowed a large memorial charitable fund in his memory. Ah me, to think that a young man's death should be of more help than his life——"

Then my highest banjo string snapped viciously in my face,—a way it has sometimes,—and I went up to bed with a stinging, narrow welt across my cheek.

Billy's room looked very cheerful in the firelight, and after I had turned up the gas and poked under the bed and behind the portières I felt fairly comfortable, though there was certainly an undeniable presence in the room, a presence that made itself known in elusive smell of cigarettes, and in an occasional creak along the floor, or a rustle at the window. It did not seem quite honorable to me for Billy to come back in smoke and chair-joints, but I have noticed that live men are very apt to modify promises to suit later conveniences, and I suppose the dead have some privileges. I was pretty frightened that first night, I admit. I am a little bit afraid of night, anyway, and I know of nothing more suggestive of infinity, eternity, and all the scares than to be left alone in a strange room at midnight with a dress that fastens up the back. But I somehow succeeded in getting out of my clothes, and with a fair compromise between my fears and Mrs. Dana's gas bill I climbed with some misgivings into bed.

Now I usually sleep as stolidly as a log of wood. I'm not at all the kind of person who thrashes round all over a bed. But the next morning I solemnly swear that there was the imprint of a large head on the farther pillow. You can imagine I went down to breakfast feeling pretty strange.

But the day went pleasantly, and when night came I just left the gas burning half-way up, and I put the great, round, ninny face of my banjo on the pillow beside me, and it was a great comfort in the night when things creaked to reach out and strike a reassuring discord of banjo strings.

I got rather nervous as the days went by, but I grew very fond of the room, and very curious and pitiful concerning Billy Dana. Of course, in order to keep up at all I had to be awfully frivolous and scoffing with myself, but I did take good care of Billy Dana's things, and when Sunday came I actually went to church at St. Francis's with Mrs. Dana and the Bishop and his wife. The Bishop preached and was rather embarrassingly gratified at my attendance. I didn't like Billy's memorial window. It was a great, shiny, showy, gleamy affair, with a perfectly huge bunch of pure white Easter lilies. Why, it looked like a young Girl-Saint's memorial, and I somehow had a feeling that Billy wouldn't have liked it, that it was the sort of window that Billy knew would make the fellows laugh, even if they didn't mean to. And it said on it in big, leaded letters:

"WILTON DANA.

"DIED, JUNE, 1901, IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY."

And I didn't like that either, for it was a lie. Billy Dana didn't die in the service of his country; Billy Dana died doing *stunts*, and that's the whole truth about that! And I fancy Billy was the last boy in the world to want to put on airs about an adventure.

When I came home from church I went directly to my room, and then and there I did the nerviest thing I ever did in my life: I took all the letters out of Billy Dana's top desk drawer and *burned* them, for fear I should yield to my itching temptation to read them and find out really just what sort of a man Billy was. And I took a few books that were best unread and burned them before his mother should find them, and I took a crimson smoking-coat that might help some poor person and hid it down at the bottom of my trunk to take home. Just for fun I did that ghoulish thing, I robbed the dead! Then I took up my banjo and played jig tunes, because I really wanted to cry for the misery of any young person having to be dead.

My banjo was a great comfort to me those days, for it always seemed to understand my Billy Dana moods. You see, my banjo was a reckless thing itself, and, having had a story of its own, appreciated the plot in other people's lives. And when I play my banjo I think I understand things too. You see, my banjo was a present to me when I was a little girl, sixteen years old—ten years ago. I was a silly, sick little thing, and I was spending the winter in Arizona. And there was

a man there whom I cared for quickly and picturesquely, as one does at sixteen. And I never saw him but once, and he was—drunk,—rollickingly, recklessly, dare-devil drunk,—and he sat on the shaded porch of an Arizona tavern with a banjo in his hand, playing his soul and all his future away to a greedy, infatuated, hatefully beautiful, sickeningly shoddy half-breed woman. And the strident music was like all the imps of hell let loose, and the man's face was crowded and jostled with all the badness and all the goodness you had ever dreamed of. And I was young and wild and hysterical, and I thought I saw a soul about to be damned, and I ran over to him, stumbling on my riding-habit, and stamped my foot at him, and cried great, sixteen-year-old tears. "Oh, don't be such a fool, Boy," I gasped,—imagine my saying "Boy" to him,—and he jumped up and threw his banjo on the ground, and, grabbing his sombrero, made me a mocking, low bow that sent the color flaming to my face, and I ran back crying into the house and up to my room. But the next morning when our party started away the proprietor handed me a banjo, "with the compliments of Monsieur Black Sheep."

I laughed and I cried and I felt very ashamed, and the party jollied me unmercifully and my mother scolded me roundly—but I kept the banjo. And I think the banjo likes me, and would do anything I asked it to, but the fact remains that my banjo-playing has brought me several experiences that would startle my mother.

But that is neither here nor there. What really matters is that the banjo helped me very much at Mrs. Dana's house party, for not sleeping very well at night made me rather mopey through the daytime, so that I spent a good deal of time in my room, dodging the ingénue and the Bishop's wife. The evenings were jolly enough, but I am afraid that, on the whole, I was a worthless guest, except for my banjo-playing. Why, I couldn't get up the faintest interest in any of the young men, and the Bishop bored me horribly with his unflagging solicitude about my immortal soul—and my more fleeting charms.

We were invited for a week, and on the fifth evening, because we had proved ourselves such pleasant people, Mr. Dana actually invited us up into his library for our after-dinner coffee and cigars. It was the interesting, conservative room of a marriage-tamed man. No wild oats could have flourished in the dustless, immaculate atmosphere of that sanctum. So purged, so chaste, so altogether cultured was the whole effect that I could easily imagine how Billy Dana must have gloated over the chaotic glories of his own apartment.

While I was in one corner looking at some very valuable and uninteresting foreign photographs the Bishop joined me with a small album in his hand. "Here is a picture of that Billy Dana," he whispered, and thrust the little book at me. I snatched at the open page

with ill-concealed eagerness. A picture of Billy Dana?—Good Lord, it was the Arizona man!

I assure you I did not sleep very much that night. Life and death and the absurdly awful marvels of coincidence appalled me. The virile, living sensuousness of the room rose up and mocked me, and the evasive memory of cigarette smoke permeated everything like the ghost of a ghost. I opened my eyes to the rousing crimson ruin of a man's room, and I closed them to the searing vision of an impudent, dark, roistering face, distorted at last into a grim attempt at complacent death. And I lay and cried as only the young *living* can cry for the young *dead*. And my banjo lay beside me, with its heartstrings torn and twisted and snarled like cotton thread.

I was a wreck in the morning, and stayed in bed in my best pink kimona, while all the house-party people went to the dog-show. Mrs. Dana was kindness itself before she left, and the Bishop was distressed to hear of my illness and wanted to come up and have prayers with me,—he thought it would be a comfort to me,—but I wouldn't let him, for I had a sneaking, hysterical fear that he would pray with his eyes open. I just wanted to be alone to jolly myself into a good-humor and mend my poor blasted banjo, for I had, temporarily at least, cried away my sorrow, and life seemed suddenly fresh and pungent again, like a quick-drawn breath on peppermint or ether.

So I was having a beautiful time all by myself, sitting up in bed with no worse fear than of the Bishop's return, and I had just succeeded in petting my banjo into tune when I heard an awful commotion downstairs in the hall. Someone screamed, and someone fell down, and a door slammed, and a big, gruff voice called out, "*Who said I was dead?*" Then came a lot of hurrying footsteps and voices and confusion, and then up the stairs, three steps at a time, rushed somebody singing and laughing and shouting like a mad man. My door flew wide open, and there on the threshold stood the *Arizona man*!

When he saw me his face went perfectly gray, and he reeled up against the door and gasped for breath. Then he burst out laughing like a crazy buccaneer.

"Of all the fools in Christendom!" he cried. "I have been searching for you in the uttermost corners of the world—and here you are in my own four-poster bed!"

WEAPONS

MERIBAH PHILBRICK REED

THIS fine-chased blade a Roman soldier bore;
 Here is the silver quoit he pitched at play;
 This sword within a gold-encrusted sheath,
 Hiding a golden dagger underneath,
 Wrought hara-kiri on some traitor. Nay,

Not water rust, that stain from tip to end.
 Yon Malay kris with acid-eaten edge,
 The Indian knife, these cruel bits of steel
 Shaped crescent-wise, made wounds which did not heal—
 Made gaping wounds which spake a foe's fierce pledge.

Here's a stiletto with Cellini's mark,—
 A woman's weapon, sharp as woman's tongue;
 Her name in rubies in the handle set,—
 With this some Grande Signora paid a debt—
 Deeper than words the pretty plaything stung.

. Best of all, I like
 My Praying Sword,—brought over placid seas,
 Red-coral wreathed, gem-strewn with shining isles,
 From that far country of Eternal Smiles
 And Endless Woes. Upon brown, patient knees

The Slayer crouched, with elbows on the hilt,—
 A serpent coiled,—before the god of Fate,
 Imploring strength and opportunity
 To hurl to licking flame the enemy
 Who came one night, and left him desolate.

As in a mirror, vision-worn and dim,
 The Image shifts. With hungry palms upbent
 And paynim chant he begs the sacrifice.
 A custom haunts me known 'neath colder skies—
 Grace before Meat that exhortation meant.

THE MAN IN THE TOWER

By Francis Howard Williams

Author of "The Flute Player and Other Poems," "Athnan," etc.



"**W**HERE'S Number 12? She's always loafin' and gittin' tangled up with the Glenside accommodation or the Buffalo express."

The man in the signal tower looked through the north window at a clear track bearing straight away for two miles. Then he turned and glanced at the white light a mile to the southeast on the tower at Fern Rock.

His station was at a curve where the track made a letter U upon the green faces of the farms.

"Durned ef it don't seem ter me thet Bickford gits behind schedule a puppose to amuse hisself. Oh, here he comes!"

The man in the tower had been showing white for ten minutes and was anxious to get rid of Number 12 freight ahead of the express, which was due at eleven-fifty-seven P.M. and didn't like to be held. Number 12 came wheezing up the grade under a curtain of bituminous smoke which soiled the sky and hung like a draggled skirt across the stars. She saw the white signal and labored past with her eighth of a mile of rumbling empties. The watcher waited till the square caboose was abreast his perch, then turned his lever to the red. The glow fell up the track for fifty yards; beyond the rails glittered like silver ribbons in the moonlight.

"I'll give her five minutes to the sidin'." He glanced towards Fern Rock; a white light still. He waited twenty seconds; the tower at Fern Rock showed red; the freight had got there, and the watcher turned his lever to the green.

"I can give the Buffalo a go-ahead-careful, anyway," he muttered.

A vagrant wind loitered across the meadow and touched the tower coldly; the loose sashes answered with a lonely rattle. The grunting of the freight died in distance and the silence became like a living thing with a heart that beat inaudibly; and the man in the tower, waiting, felt a pulse in his ears,—the whirr of crickets and the chromatic scale of the katydids. And he looked towards Fern Rock for a change to green, but it didn't come. Another minute; Fern Rock stayed red; something was wrong; the caboose had jumped the track, like enough; it's a bad habit of cabooses. From far up the track a whistle:

One long, then two short notes, faint and clear.

"Jest the usual luck," snarled the man in the tower. "The Buffalo's on time, and I've got to hold her up."

He gave the lever a quick jerk to red, but even in the moment the narrow stairs echoed the confusion of heavy footsteps. The man in the tower lunged obliquely, groping with an impotent hand to the spot between his eyes where the swift pain was, and through his bruised lids he felt the questioning light of one cold star looking through the north window. Then there was the sound of many waters, the bursting of myriads of little bubbles in some tide which rolled far up a distant, never-ending beach, and amid the drowse of it a summoning call:

One long, then two short notes, full and near.

The man in the tower knew that his lips were fashioning the words "The Buffalo!" and that hurried voices were whispering in the dark. An arm reached across his prostrate form, throwing the signal to white; he heard the lever click malignantly as it slipped past the ratchets. He tried to rise, but met a red flare and a rending sound that seemed within his brain. Again the narrow stairs echoed confusion, and the cold star, looking through the north window, saw its face reflected in a scarlet pool upon the floor.

Supreme moments sometimes turn men into gods. The man in the tower faced a supreme moment and became divine. He pressed back the hot stream of life flowing out between his fingers, and flung himself headlong against the iron mechanism. The power that for one instant held death at bay was the indomitable immortal spirit; the thing which fell across the lever was but dead flesh obedient to the law of gravity; but the law erred not: the tower light changed to red.

The cold star, still gazing with serene compassion, saw the deed, and the whirr of the crickets was punctured with sudden sword-points of sound stabbing the dark a hundred yards up the track:

Three short shrieks, charged with fear.

That night the Buffalo express got in two hours late. The passengers grumbled a little and most of them were late at breakfast the next morning.

Over their rolls and coffee they glanced at an item in the morning papers reporting the murder of a signalman (name not ascertained) by unknown parties, supposed to be train-wreckers.

The readers wondered at the depravity of the human heart,—then turned their newspapers to get at the stock quotations.

LOW-LIE-DOWN

BY MADISON CAWEIN

JOHN-A-DREAMS and Harum-Scarum
 Came a-riding through the town ;
 At the Sign o' the Jug and Jorum
 There they met with Low-lie-down.

Brave in shoes of Romany leather,
 Bodice blue and gypsy gown,
 And a cap of fur and feather,
 In the inn sat Low-lie-down.

Harum-Scarum kissed her lightly,
 Smiled into her eyes of brown,
 Clasped her waist and held her tightly,
 Saying, " Love me, Low-lie-down."

Then with many an oath and swagger,
 As a man of great renown,
 On the board he clapped his dagger,
 Called for drink and sat him down.

So a while they laughed together ;
 Then he rose, and with a frown
 Sighed, " While still 'tis pleasant weather
 I must leave thee, Low-lie-down."

So away rode Harum-Scarum,
 Singing rode he from the town ;
 At the Sign o' the Jug and Jorum
 Weeping lingered Low-lie-down.

Then this John-a-dreams, in tatters,
 In his pocket ne'er a crown,
 Touched her, saying, " Wench, what matters ?
 Dry your eyes and, come, sit down."

" Here's my hand : we'll roam together
 Far away from thorp and town.
 Here's my heart for any weather,
 And my dreams too, Low-lie-down.

" Some men call me dreamer, poet ;
 Some men call me fool and clown ;
 What I am but you shall know it—
 Only you, sweet Low-lie-down."

AVOWALS

BEING THE THIRD OF A NEW SERIES OF "CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN"

By *George Moore*

Author of "The Untilled Field," "Evelyn Innes," etc.



ONE morning as I sat thinking of Turgenieff my servant entered to say that a foreign gentleman wished to see me. She could not pronounce his name, she could only tell me that it ended in "of." "A Russian, no doubt," I said; "show him in." And while my visitor was taking off his hat and coat in the anteroom I wondered if he might be one who had known Turgenieff, and tremulous with expectation I invited him to pronounce the syllables that preceded the "of," the "off" that had caught my servant's ear. My visitor's name was perfectly well known to me; I knew him to be one of Tolstoy's critics, one of Turgenieff's translators, and he had come to tell me that he was collecting answers to Tolstoy's latest declarations regarding art, and the objects of art. This was a disappointment. I had been looking forward to talking about Turgenieff. But the Russian had come for my opinions, and here I was in a dilemma—on one side there was the unpleasantness of discussing a book which put aside Beethoven and Wagner as inferior writers, preferring the sonatas that Mozart wrote in his teens to their greatest works, and some of Charles Dickens's "Christmas Carols" to Shakespeare and Ibsen; on the other side there was my wish to please my visitor, and at the back of my mind a thought that if I told him what he wanted to hear he would probably recompense me by talking about Turgenieff later on. So I tried to discuss "What is Art?" but after a little while anger got the better of me, and naturally wishing to exhibit all my intelligence before my Russian interviewer, I laid my difficulty before him, saying that the subject was too disagreeable a one for me to discuss, and begged to be allowed to talk about Tolstoy's novels instead. He consented, and I rattled on in first-rate reviewing style about "War and Peace," until the feeling broke over me that I was saying little he had not heard before. It seemed essential to say something new about Tolstoy; there was no excuse for the rigmarole I was indulging in, and the temptation to tell my secret mind overcame me. "I have ideas about Tolstoy, but

I am afraid they will shock you," I said, and immediately my visitor began to show a keener interest in the conversation. He said he would like to hear my secret mind, and to help the conversation he put a question.

"Now, what is the first thing that strikes you in Tolstoy?"

"The great psychologist that the world admires seems to me a somewhat mythical person, and what strikes me in Tolstoy are his eyes—those miraculous eyes that have seen more of the visible world than eyes ever saw before. Gautier boasted that the invisible world was visible to him, but did he see as clearly as Tolstoy? or, to be more precise, did he see as much as Tolstoy? Seeing, like hearing, is only a question of comparison. There are music conductors, not necessarily the greatest conductors, who hear the whole orchestra together and in detail, who can pick out the faintest fault—Colonne, for instance (Berlioz, always interested in his idea, used to pass over mistakes, and when the musicians played jokes upon him he could not tell who were the delinquents). As Colonne hears Tolstoy sees—he sees more than Gautier, more than Maupassant, more, even, than Hugo. Maupassant's vision is comparable to the vision of—shall we say Terburg? Whereas Tolstoy's vision can be compared to nothing but the vision of Jan Van Eyck. His vision is as intense and as complete, though I should be sorry to say that he sees as beautifully."

At this point I paused, and my visitor said:

"Pray, go on; what you're saying interests me very much. Turgenieff said the same, and I'm waiting to see if you will conclude as he did."

"Now you embarrass me. For whatever I say, if I don't conclude as he did I shall be proved an ass out of my own mouth." My visitor pressed me to continue, and I said: "Tolstoy knows all that is passing, all that is ephemeral within and without. He can tell you the feelings of a young man as he looks at a young girl and desires her as truly as he will tell you the changes that the season brings into the landscape, but he never had any clear conception of a human soul as a distinct entity—he knows little of the soul as a being complete in itself. His knowledge of the soul is relative and episodic; he tries to arrive at the soul from without. I'm afraid I cannot express myself better at this moment, but my meaning, I'm sure, is clear; his characters are, therefore, without organic construction. But I'm most anxious to hear what Turgenieff said."

"He said the very same."

"Did he! Tell me again that he said the same. I should love to hear you say it again." And my visitor assured me that Turgenieff had said the same. "But how much more beautifully he must have said it. After all, it is the idea that counts; tell me again that he

said the very same—the very, very same. Fill my cup of bliss. My interviewer poured out another cup of bliss, and having drunk it and smacked my lips many times, I continued,—no doubt I continued, but I have told all I remember of our conversation.



In speaking of "Anna Karenina" W. D. Howells said, "This is not like life, it is life." And this is true. "Anna Karenina" is the moment of living, the amusement and the grief of the moment, and "War and Peace" is the same; it is not like life, it is life. While we are reading these novels the very dust of the road is upon us. It is the whole theme of bodily life and little else; these books make other books seem shadowy and thin; they are as intense and as vivid as life, and we remember them as we remember life, fondly. They are long,—nearly as long as life,—but their length does not help them. "A House of Gentle Folk" is no more than a few chapters of "War and Peace," and it is not as vivid nor is it as intense, but it is more rememberable. We spent but a little while with Liza and Lavrelsky, and the book seemed to us only a charming story, but the sorrows of Liza and Lavrelsky have become part of our consciousness, their joys and sufferings being part of the sufferings and joys that man has endured and must endure forever.

Tolstoy and Turgenieff were contemporaries, and though they differed as much as human beings may differ, there are some points of resemblance; in neither was there any progression; as they are in the beginning, so they are in the end. Turgenieff began by writing the most beautiful tales in the world, and he went on writing beautifully and wisely. I know nothing in Turgenieff that is not beautiful, and only one thing the wisdom of which may be questioned. We may question the wisdom of the letter he wrote on his death-bed to Tolstoy. It is as perfect as anything he ever wrote, and for a long time I could not read it without bursting into tears; so, perhaps, it is as well that I cannot lay my hand upon it now. It consists of only five or six lines. He says he is lying very ill, and as for getting better, it is not to be thought of. He tells Tolstoy how he is honored by the fact that he was his contemporary, and he begs of Tolstoy to return to art, that mysterious gift which has come to him he knows not whence nor how. He tells him that he would die easier if he were sure that Tolstoy would put controversy by. The letter ends with a few words to the effect that he is too weak to write any more, and it is extraordinary how well his dying words make us feel the helplessness of a dying man. The letter is as beautiful as anything he ever wrote, but he should have known that Tolstoy could not change himself.

In my last article I spoke of Turgenieff as having come out of the East telling tales. Now there is little of the tale-teller in Tolstoy. Whereas Turgenieff's art came out of the eternal East, Tolstoy's came out of the ephemeral West. He took "Vanity Fair" as his model, he adopted the form of "Vanity Fair," the division of a family into four groups, and "Anna Karenina" is a sort of "Vanity Fair" written with moral ideas substituted for social vanities.

With this rapid criticism I will pass on to the greater book, "War and Peace." Here again we have the same form, a family divided into different groups, and the life histories of each are told. In the fourth volume Tolstoy draws the threads together, and he does this miraculously well. The size of the book, the number of characters, and the multiplicity of incidents have suggested to all critics the great canvases of Tintoretto and Veronese, and Tolstoy's execution is as easy and as sure as theirs. But the Venetians were tranquil pagans, content with the kingdom of the earth, whereas Tolstoy is the reincarnation of Luther as Luther was a reincarnation of Paul; and when Tolstoy is not describing external things with a zeal and patience equal to that of Van Eyck he is full of alarm at the wickedness of the world, and it is difficult to give any idea of the extent to which Tolstoy mixes up the changing aspects of things that the eye perceives with the unchanging affections that the heart ponders. As Wagner seems to have attached the same importance to the flitting horses in the flies as to the music in the orchestra, so does Tolstoy seem to attach the same importance to the number of freckles on the man's nose as he does to the man's love of his children. In writing "War and Peace" he seems to have set out with no more subtle artistic intention than a desire to describe the whole of life. The first two volumes contain descriptions of hunting, shooting, sledging, card parties, balls, duels! and I laid aside the book to wonder. "Flaubert," I said to myself, "represented the external world in its many and ever-changing aspects, for he wished us to see the external world flowing like water before our eyes as Brahma sees it. But I can detect no such subtle intention in this book."

I did not take up "War and Peace" again for a year or more, and the reason of my taking it up was that I had read in a newspaper a mention of how Prince André lay on a battle-field looking at the stars, and in seeking the scene out I read the whole of the third volume, marvelling greatly at the ceaseless invention with which Tolstoy takes Pierre from one regiment to another, from tent to tent, showing us what is happening at every part of the immense battle, explaining the different plans of the Russian generals. He explains Napoleon's plan for the battle with an insight that makes us ask ourselves if he were

not as great a military tactician as Napoleon. But it was not until Pierre is taken prisoner, until he is forced to follow the French army from Moscow, and meets a philosopher-peasant on the way who has a little pink puppy (the puppy generally runs on three legs) that I began to understand that the hero of the book is Destiny. It was then that I began to understand that everyone in the book set out to do something, and that everyone did do something, but that no one did what he had set out to do, not even Napoleon, and I marvelled greatly how Tolstoy could have described all the things he described in the first volumes without once indicating the idea that must have been at the back of his mind all the time. In the fourth volume Natasha abandons her sensuous, frivolous girlhood and becomes extraordinarily interested in her babies, even in their disgusting little ailments; and we assist in the sinking into old age of the generation we knew in the first volume, and we watch the young people whom we knew in the first volume sinking into middle age. While reading and for some time after I thought I had never read anything more poignant than the scenes in which Natasha's mother talks only of things of twenty years ago. I marvel greatly at her son; it is only in the fourth volume that Tolstoy allows us to know that he is a mere commonplace man who married an ugly princess. Now he is interested in farming, and the last time we see him he is standing on a balcony watching the small rain that the thirsting oats are drinking up greedily. Pierre too has grown older, and he still goes up to St. Petersburg to attend spiritualistic séances, but now he is only faintly interested in spiritual things, and he knows that his life will know no further change.

The end of the book is so great that we forgive the description of the freckles on the left side of the footman's nose, a footman who once brought in a samovar; we forgive the coats that cannot be buttoned and the waistcoats that overlap; we forgive even the description of the Rolstoffs removing their furniture from Moscow after the battle; the scene in which Natasha and her mother count the napkins and tablecloths and dusters—the description occupies several pages, and it would be difficult to say in what it differs from an auctioneer's catalogue. We forgive and wonder that if we were to reread the first and second volumes the knowledge of the end would enable us to reread the hunting scenes, and the sledging scenes, and the gambling scenes. We wonder, but we do not turn to the book again. Notwithstanding our æsthetic curiosity, we shrink from the task of rereading the first and second volumes; to reread them would be like reliving some part of our lives over again. Now why did Tolstoy describe so many things? He derived his literary composition from the English novel, but the English novel is free from realistic description. Did he get his realistic descriptions from the French novel? Are his novels

a stew of "Vanity Fair" and "Madame Bovary," with a little remorse of conscience from Edgar Poe?

French realism proceeds from "Madame Bovary." "Madame Bovary" was published in '57. "War and Peace" was published in '60. And three years would not be sufficient for the composition of "War and Peace." Tolstoy must have begun it long before the publication of "Madame Bovary." But Flaubert's realistic description rests upon a philosophical basis. If you would understand "Madame Bovary's" soul, the Normandy village and landscape must be described in its every detail. The novelist's business is like the entomologist's, not only the insect, but the plant it lives upon must be described. Well, Tolstoy began as a materialist; the writings of Darwin and Spencer interested him as they interested Flaubert; maybe Tolstoy's realism was the spirit of the age, the result of the study of natural sciences. This may be a true explanation of Tolstoy's realism, but there is another explanation and a more interesting one, that Tolstoy's realism is the realism of a primitive people; comparable to the realism of the painters of the fifteenth century, the realism of children who stop at the wayside to tease a beetle, to investigate every bush. It pleases us to see something of the primitive painter in Tolstoy—in a word, to detect an element of "folk" in his elaborate compositions.



Literature has been divided into the Romantic and Classical schools; we all agree that certain writers are classical whilst others are romantic, but so far as I know no one has ever been able to say what is classical and what is romantic, and I confess that I have lived until quite lately in the same ignorance as the critics that preceded me. But one day it was suddenly borne in upon me that if we were to substitute the words "folk" and "culture" for the words "romantic" and "classical" we should understand how art begins in the irresponsible imaginations of the people, how it wells up in the imaginations of the people like a spring in a mountain waste, and how the course of every artistic movement may be compared to that of a mountain spring. The spring rises amid rocks, it trickles and forms a rivulet, it swells into a stream, and after many wanderings, perhaps after a brief sojourn in artificial ponds and basins, it returns to the earth whence it came. A few examples will make my meaning clear. Homer is art emerging out of folk, whilst from Sophocles the element of folk has almost disappeared. Shakespeare is art emerging out of folk. The writing is always culture, the substance is very often folk, and we actually assist at the shearing away of the folk tale from the tragedy of "Hamlet." We may consider "Hamlet" as culture in substance, in expression, but "As You Like It" is purely folk in substance; the

verbal expression is culture as much as the verbal expression of the tragedy is culture, but the various Dukes, the forest meetings, are folk.

And as it is with literature, so it is with painting. Pinturicchio, who preceded Raphael, is the type of the folk painter. He is a tale-teller telling tales among people emerging from the religious gloom of the middle ages, tales of saints and miracles, quaint little saints playing hand organs or viols, or we find him rambling among religious processions in narrow Gothic streets, always delightfully spontaneous and always heedless of proportions or anatomies: he is the pavement artist of the Renaissance and stands on the threshold of culture. But Botticelli represents culture in its first, and Raphael in its last stage.

Architecture began, I suppose, with the wigwam. But we need not go so far back. The Irish romanesque chapels are examples of pure folk architecture, and the Gothic cathedrals—Chartres, for instance—combine folk and culture. The architecture is culture, the sculpture on the walls is folk. Folk-music is merely eight-bar melodies, and maybe the element of folk disappears quicker from music than from sculpture or painting, and whether Palestrina advanced as far towards culture as Botticelli or stands nearer to Perugino I will leave to another critic to decide—the nearer purpose of this article is to decide whether we should attribute Tolstoy's realism to French influence or if we should regard it as a folk inheritance. Well, its uncouthness inclines us to attribute it to folk, and folk it may well be, for Tolstoy is a Tartar. Or he may have picked his realism out of a book, for Tolstoy is a pedagogue. His realism came to him in his youth, and he has been interested in so many things that he never had time to consider how much he should describe or how little. It is necessary to remember that Tolstoy is not one man, but many men, and the many souls that inhabit his soul are an ill-assorted crew. The man of genius we will put first, and after the man of genius comes the pedagogue and the Tartar; the Tartar is followed by the early Christian hermit; and room must be found for an artist, half primitive, half decadent. In speaking of a painter we speak of quality, and if Tolstoy were a painter, we should say that his painting is without quality, without that charm which everyone perceives and desires in silk or satin, but which few perceive in oil painting, yet it is as necessary in oil painting as it is in a gown, and I sympathize with the dressmaker's view that it would be well to know the quality of the silk before we decide on the design of the gown. We have praised the design of Tolstoy's novels; the design of "War and Peace" may be compared on account of the splendor of its invention to Tintoretto and Veronese, but it has no share in their beauty of color and refined execution. Tolstoy's drawing-rooms are very modern

—they are very Royal Academy. They are lower in tone than Mr. Sargent's, but they are equally pungent and vivacious. The candelabras and the Aubusson carpets are executed as easily, and there is a profusion of women in tight dresses and open-work stockings and glittering shoes.

One day I went to order something at the grocer's, and the grocer asked me if I had seen the great social picture at the Academy. "Mr. Sargent's great picture, which the King admires. The three young ladies are sitting on an ottoman, and they wear tight silk dresses which allow you to appreciate their figures, and their fingers are spread out over the cushions, and they are ready to spring up at any moment to receive visitors. There is a piece of tapestry behind the ladies which I hear cost three thousand pounds at Christie's; and there are six footmen in the hall always waiting to show up the visitors, so they say. And the young ladies sit with their lips parted, all expectant, and they are so real that you can almost hear them saying, 'How do you do, dear? On Tuesday, dear, on Tuesday.' I'm sure they drink champagne at every meal, sir."

I do not think any better description of Mr. Sargent's portrait groups has yet appeared, and so, perhaps, my readers will forgive me for chronicling my grocer's art criticism. But they must not confuse Tolstoy with Mr. Sargent; one is a man of genius, and his drawing-rooms are not quite so vulgar. His landscapes are dry and hard, a dirty drab, and they remind one of Bastien-Lepage. The summer night in "*Anna Karenina*" is copied from nature; and it is as well copied as Bastien-Lepage could copy it. I am thinking now of the summer night when Levine lies on the hay after his day's work seeing the summer night drawn and withdrawn like a faint veil across the summer sky. But his summer night is not comparable to Turgenieff's summer nights. I remember some people returning, I think, from a picnic, and their carriage passes under the branches of some trees and the odorous meadows extend on either side. I think they pass by some rustling wheat. No fact do I remember, everything has passed from me but the emotion—a sense of love and tenderness mixing with the calm, benign night. I remember other nights in Turgenieff,—the night at Naples when he hears a woman singing,—but this article is about Tolstoy and not about Turgenieff.



Tolstoy's soul is a populous soul; it is filled with a strange company, some few of which have been already mentioned. One of the minor characters I said was an artist,—a half-primitive, half-decadent artist,—and there I left my idea. I was thinking at that moment of Tolstoy's uncouth execution; the name that came up in my mind was Caracci's—a Caracci of the Steppes. A Caracci in which we catch

glimpses here and there of Bellini. Glimpses of Bellini through Caracci! Can anything be more incongruous? Nothing. But can anything be more incongruous than Tolstoy? his personal life? his doctrines and his art? Place must be found among the strange company that inhabit his soul for another important minor figure—a sophist. My readers will gibe a little; they will accept the pedagogue and the hermit and the artist easily, but the sophist startles and offends them, for Tolstoy has come to seem to them the type of a man that will sacrifice all for truth. It is true that he has been trying all his life to be sincere, he has screamed out his soul from the housetops; but the sophist is ever by him, and amid the screams of the preacher we hear the shrilling of the sophist. Nearly all my similies have been drawn from the art of painting; music has been well-nigh forgotten. It occurs to me that there is a great deal of cornet playing in the Tolstoy orchestra; trumpets are never sufficient for him; and unexpectedly we hear the blatant instrument; and the cornet player is the sophist. His Napoleonic solo in “War and Peace” is a very strident performance, and we shall examine it and some other pieces of the same kind in our next article.



THE INVITATION

BY MARIE VAN VORST

UNDER my window, oh blue-winged swallow,
 Build you your nest where the eaves hang low;
 Spring is here, and the Summer will follow,
 With June's mild warmth, and the July glow.

Here you may rest you in peace, and breed you
 A feathered flock who will fly afar—
 Ships to the clouds, when you circling speed you
 Down to the South, where the warm days are.

Come,—for my window is high and lonely,—
 Woo your mate 'neath the sheltering eaves;
 None shall whisper your secret, only
 The clambering vine, with its screening leaves.

Swallow, swallow, why seek you for other
 Nook? Here build where you've sung and wooed;
 Blue-winged lover,—soft, feathered mother,—
 Build you your home for your cherished brood.

AT THE CROWN AND SCEPTRE

By Ralph Henry Barbour

Author of "The Land of Joy," etc.



FROM THE JOURNAL OF SIR MICHAEL CURRIE, OF BALLY-NA-FAG.

'T WAS a devil of a night, black as a pocket, with a bit of a wind whipping the leaves along the road until they rustled and whispered and sent my hand to my sword-hilt a dozen times between the coach and the park gate. Behind me the twinkling lights of Bath came through the trees as much as to say, "Sure, we're watchin' you, Mike Currie; be off now about your business!" Half way, belike, up the drive towards the Hall I heard the stamping of one of the horses and the low voice of Pat speaking him quiet. Then came the laurel walk and——

"Whis-s-st!" says I softly.

"Is it you, dear?" asks a bit of a voice, trembling like a bird's.

"Who else would it be?" I whispers. "Give me hold of the soft hand of you," says I, "and keep your pretty mouth closed till I'm through with it."

It was that dark I could see nothing but the dim sky overhead and the trees where they stood against it. But I found Clementa's hand and I took her in my arms, mighty gently, you understand, for fear of alarming her. She trembled a bit, but I'd not be blaming her for that, for, sure, 'tis a frightsome thing to steal out of a fine, warm bed at two of the morning and wait in the rustling dark to be run away with. When I'd found the dear lips of her and kissed them, I gathered the cloak about her.

"The coach is at the gate, darling," I whispers. "Walk easy on your little feet, for, faith, it's not me that'll be wanting to see Sir William the night."

I led the way down the road, one hand on the edge of her cloak to guide her, and t'other on my sword. Pat was waiting at the gate. Beyond him, drawn under the big trees at the side of the road, was the coach, the lights hidden.

"Is all well?" whispers Pat hoarsely.

"Up on the box, you rascal," says I, "and drive like the devil! Pull up for nothing till you see the lights of the Crown and Sceptre between their ears!"

With that I helps Clementa into the coach, jumps in after her, and claps to the door. "All right!" I cries.

Faith, the very devil of a ride it was! There wasn't a rock for fourteen miles that we didn't ride over. The coach lurched this way and that way, and banged and thumped and jumped and played tattoo with the ground. And the horses were galloping like mad, with Pat, on the box, singing "Barney Malone" and swearing at the top of his voice. Sure, there in the coach not a word could I say save I put my mouth to Clementa's ear; and when I tried that, *bump!* would go the coach over a rock and *bang!* would go the two heads of us. So I took her in my arms and braced my feet, and like that, with just a squeeze and a kiss now and then, we rode to the Crown and Sceptre at Illwich. But that's a lie, for three miles from there Billy, riding alongside, beat a rat-a-tat on the window.

"What's wanting?" I shouted, sticking my head out.

"There's a coach at our heels, sir!"

"A coach! You're drunk, you rascal!"

"Look for yesel', sir; you can see the lights on the hill." And, sure enough, there they were, two yellow devils of lanterns bobbing and jumping like will-o'-the-wisps gone mad half a mile, belike, behind us.

"Tell Pat to drive faster," I calls.

Then I put my head back and draws Clementa's ear to me.

"Sir William's after us, darling," says I. "Bad 'cess to the old devil," says I. "If he catches us this side of the Crown and Sceptre," I says, "he'll be sorry for it!"

"You'd not kill him?" she asks in a queer sort of a voice.

"Devil a bit," I says; "I'll just run my skewer between his ribs, and no harm done," I says.

With that she was silent a bit, and I put my head out of the window again. The lights were nearer. I shouted to Pat,—

"Lash 'em, you fool, lash 'em!"

Then I heard the *whish-s-sh* of the big whip, and my head hit the side of the window with a thump that brought stars into the sky. On and on came the lights, nearer and nearer. "Sure," I rauttered, "'tis wings his horses have."

At that I felt a hand tugging at my arm, and I turned, groping for Clementa.

"He mustn't catch us," she cries, close to my ear.

"Sure, and that's the truth!" I cries back.

"Maybe—maybe 'twould be better if we went back," says she, her voice very fearful.

"Tare and 'ounds!" I cries. "Go back, is it? Devil a step, my darling!"

"Then—then, if you stopped the coach, I could get out and hide in the trees," she cries.

"Faith, what's frightening you, sweetheart?" says I. "If your father catches up with us, why, 'tis not you nor me that'll come to harm, I'm thinking. Bad 'cess to him for——"

"My father?" she asked, strange-like, shouting above the rattle and bang of the carriage.

"Your father," says I.

"My *father!*" she says again.

"Hush, hush," I says, patting her hand. "'Tis all right, my darling; you'll feel better forby you get a sip o' something hot at the inn."

But I felt the plump shoulders of her heaving under her cloak.

"There, there," I shouts tenderly, "don't be crying, darling. Sure, you wrench the heart of me with your tears."

"I'm—I'm n-not cr-crying!" she answers.

"True for you," I says.

And at that down comes the coach in a ditch with the noise of an earthquake. When I found Clementa and pulled her out, there were the lights of the inn scarce a stone's throw away, and there were the lights of the other coach across the road. Pat, swearing terrible, was trying to hold the horses, while Billy, the knave, was tearing away towards London as though Satan himself was at his horse's heels. Just as I crawled out with Clementa the door of the other coach swung open with a *bang!* and out jumped a figure, dim in the light of the lamps. Snatching my arm from Clementa's grasp I out with my sword and leaped into the middle of the road.

"A fine morning, Sir William," I says, mighty polite.

"Is it you, Mike?" asks the figure, and the voice puzzles me a deal, for 'twas not Sir William's at all.

"Sir Michael Currie, at your service," says I, holding up my guard, but stepping quietly towards him to get a glimpse of his face.

"Put up your sticker," says he, laughing. "Sure, don't you know me?"

"I'm not certain," says I. "You're not Sir William Crackthorp, that's plain. Whoever you are," says I, "come into the light."

"I'll do it," says he; and with that he walks forward towards the lanterns, when, with a yell, across the road runs Clementa.

"Roderick!" she cries, "Roderick!" And she throws herself into his arms.

"Now, what the devil's this?" says I. "Is it Rody Moore that you are?"

"The same," he says, shouting with laughter,

"Then what are you doing with your arms around the lady that is to do me the honor of becoming my wife?" asks I.

"Sure, there's been a bit of a mistake," says he. "Come, look." I went up to him, and the woman in his arms turned her face into the light. Saints of Heaven! 'Twas Clementa's mother!

"W-what!" I gasps, falling against the wheel in amazement. "Rody, for Heaven's sake, man, what means it?"

"Why, this," says he, disengaging the lady and speaking softly. "Lady Bertha and I love each other, as you well know, I'm thinking, and so, her curmudgeon of a husband sadly interfering with our passion, we'd arranged to go to London, d'ye see, Mike? But before I can get to her along you come with your coach and off goes my lady with you, thinking, no doubt, 'twas me. That's all," says he.

"All!" I shouts, "*all!* Why, you blundering idiot, you've spoiled everything! Why couldn't you fix on any other night? What am I to do, now that I'm fourteen miles from Bath, without my sweetheart?"

"Aisy, aisy, Mike," says Rody. "Look into the coach, lad."

I sprang forward and stuck my head into the blackness; I could see nothing for a bit; then my eyes made out a form huddled in the corner, and I heard stifled sobs.

"Clementa!" I cries. And,

"*Clementa!*" shrieks my Lady. "My daughter! Oh, the villain!"

"Michael, dear!" says a soft voice full of tears. I climbed in and banged the door behind me. Outside my Lady still protested feebly and Rody's voice, soothing like, reached me in low murmurs. Then Clementa was in my arms and I heard no more.

The door creaked and opened. Rody coughed, then put his head in.

"The horses are changed, Mike, and there's still a bit of road 'twixt here and London. Are you ready to go on?"

"Go on?" I shouts, leaping to my feet. "How the devil can I go on with my coach lying bottom up in the ditch? Sure, it's lucky the inn's at hand, for there'll be a fire there and a cup of the crayther; and God send Sir William doesn't come till I've tried that same!"

"Zounds!" cries Rody, "there's food and drink in the hamper, and where's the coach can't hold four?"

"Man!" I says, "do you mean it?"

"What else? Faith, we'll ride to London together, and——"

"But my Lady?" I whispered.

Rody chuckled.

"Sure, she'd be an unnatural mother if she interfered with her daughter's happiness. She bids me say to you, Madam,"—he bowed into the gloom,—"*that while lamenting the—ah——*"

"A rider, sir, coming down the hill!" cried a post-boy. We listened. The beating of hoofs reached us faintly, yet grew louder each instant.

"A coach?" asked Rody.

"Nay, sir, there's but the one horse there," answered the driver. I eased the sword.

"Steady, lad," whispers Rody; "if he's alone we'll just tie him hand and foot and put him in the other coach to think over his sins."

Then the form of horse and rider plunged towards us out of the darkness, the horse swung back on his haunches, and a servant cried out for Mister Roderick Moore and leaped to the road. He held a paper.

"What's this?" asks Rody.

"A message, your Honor, from Sir William." My Lady gave a gasp of dismay.

"Bring a light," cries Rody. The driver fetched the coach lantern and held it. Rody beckoned and I leaned over the paper with him. The letter was short.

"Mr. Roderick Moore, Esqr.,

"On the Road to London.

SIR: God bless you.

Your Grateful and Obedient Servant,

"CRACKTHORP."

Rody crushed the paper in his fist and stared silently before him with the veins big in his forehead.

"Is there any reply, your Honor?" asks the messenger.

"Reply!" roars Rody, with a mighty, full-sounding oath. "Reply?" He sent the fellow reeling against his horse with a blow in the face. "Give him that," splutters Rody.

A minute later and we were jogging towards London, Clementa and her mother in each other's arms, Rody and I forinist them. As we passed the Crown and Sceptre the light from the open door fell upon us and I caught a glimpse of Rody, his chin sunk deep and a mighty thoughtful scowl on his face.



ONE WAY OF LOOKING AT IT.

BY FRANK PRESTON SMART

I GO my way and do not care,
Though some, perforce, I must offend;
Who has no enemies can ne'er
Know what it is to have a friend.

ONE YEAR IN NAMENIA

By Judith Underwood



[NOTE.—The unfortunate settlement of Namenia, which was established on social principles greatly in advance of its time or even of the present age, was situated, as nearly as surveyors' records can place it, a few miles to the north of New Madrid, Missouri, the point at which its people went down being now covered by the inmost arm of the large bayou below Cairo. The colonists were victims of the earthquake of 1811, and no records remain of their life or philosophy save these few leaves from the wedding-book of Flavia Lamb. Half of the white satin back of the book is torn away, and the rest is yellowed and water-soaked, but the fly-leaf bears in imperishable violet ink an affectionate inscription in Latin to Flavia and her husband from the priest who married them, and the bride's own writing is the same as if it had been written yesterday, except that it is far more delicate and precise.]

1809.

RESOLUTION made by Flavia Lamb on her wedding-day, June 14, 1809:

"Since it is the fashion of all diaries that I have seen to consume much time with a bare daily record, giving no connected idea of the life described, I shall avoid this folly by remembering Cicero, whom I love. In every sentence of his I have a model for my journal. I pass through his phrases, held continually in suspense, until I reach the final verb; likewise I cannot view a human life with intelligence until all the deeds are ended. Yet I may not wait until I am dead to write my diary. I shall take the "middle way," and at the end of each year of this life about to begin I shall give a portrait of the chief events, giving its proper perspective to each, as well as I am able."

1810.

When Robert and I were married, a year ago, the Namenians crowded around us, after the custom, with wishes "ad multos annos," and we two were sure, as I suppose most brides and bridegrooms are, that we should be happy together all the years of our life. Others might avail themselves of the permission to become single when the year was ended; not we. The thought at that time was abhorrent to me.

But having never been married before, I had not counted on certain eccentricities of temperament—and no more, I suppose, had Robert. I have a way of singing a tune for my own pleasure by sounding merely the melody without giving forth the words. As the winds of an early fall compelled a close residence within our one-room cabin, this habit of mine became irritating to Robert. It had, perhaps, a whine-y sound in his ears, although before I left the world and became a Namenian I was once told I had much "darkness" in my voice. Yet Robert remarked to his wolf-dog,—so that I could hear him too,—“You would be unable to make so bad a noise as that if you tried, would you not, Ponto?”

It occurred to me that Robert was nervous. To think of a nervous Namenian, and especially one who had the forest around him, as we have, was distressing to me. It evoked, I fear, a far greater departure from tranquillity than our law permits. A manner he had of thrumming on the table where I wanted to cook annoyed me. There were other antagonisms; I forget some of them.

“We might as well end the matter,” said Robert after an aggravating encounter of idiosyncrasies one long winter evening. “It is clear that we are unsuited for each other, and it was just for such ill-matched pairs as us that the Namenian rule was intended.” I threw my arms around his neck in delight. When I had recovered my composure I gladly consented to his plan that we should allow our names in May to be placed on the list of “*Conjuges Vidui*,” so as to be released in June. By the law we were, of course, obliged to remain in the married state for the full year.

In the morning it was a great pleasure to awaken and remember that I was no longer tied to Robert. His face too beamed with joy. He chopped wood gayly in front of the door and piled it high, saying the while to the fireplace:

“O Cerberus,

Curst wolf! Thy fury inward
Turn and consume thyself.”

When I saw him so merry my spirits continued to rise. Those obstacles of the wilderness which had hitherto annoyed us we began to regard as jokes. We found amusements for the long winter evenings, and became so proficient at the game of Questions and Answers that Robert was once able to guess “Og, King of Bashan,” although he had no clew save the questions to which I was bound to answer “Yes” or “No.” Robert delicately refrained from speaking again of the cause of our joy, and the month of May drew silently near.

For the first time in my life the return of the violets made me sad. On one occasion after Robert had gathered me a great bunch

of them he said: "You might sing again, Flavia. I should be glad to hear you." But I had no heart for singing.

I had determined if there should have been a child that I could not let the community take charge of it, according to the Namenian law. I would keep it myself as a token that Robert once had loved me. But, alas! there was no child. Dido's state, when the gods took Æneas from her, was not more pitiful than mine. I caught myself often repeating her words:

"Oh, that a babe of mine
Should be lifted by thee as thy son; O, that a little Æneas
Should play in the court——"

The revelation came through a pie. I was preparing a feast for the last day before the proclamation. I was trying to be as gay as Robert as I cut a pretty design for the top cover of the pie. But my wits were deserting me. Heedlessly I cut on the crust, "*ANTE FUGAM SUBOLES*"—and Robert saw what I had done.

Then Robert looked deep into my eyes, and all at once each of us understood that the other was making believe. Robert still loved me, and I loved Robert.

"Grief is selfish," said Robert, "and I was so sad myself that I was blind to your sadness. But"—and at last he laughed without pretence—"we'll keep that pie forever."

Nevertheless, Robert and I did go to the public meeting next day. We were curious, that was all. The crier stood up and called for "*Conjuges Vidui*," and we looked around to see, expecting quite a number. But not one couple responded.

Robert drew a droll face and looked at me. "It is a fool who never changes his mind," he whispered.



AUTUMN

BY COL. KENTUCKY

WHEN frosty winds come whirling 'cross
The fields o' golden corn,
And whistle 'round the fodder shocks,
And ghosts go wailing lorn,
They hint o' joys a-coming, when
We'll sip the amber rye,
And take a slice o' golden sweet
From out the pumpkin pie.

THE BROTHERS IMPLACABLE

By Eleanor L. Stuart



I

A RAILWAY carriage of unusual equipment, and with its special engine, was drawn up on a siding at Tellin to await the passing of the "Petersburg to Paris" mail. The Princess Ganodkin was seated in its salon—en route for the Paris season.

"Maroc, why spend the night here?" she inquired.

Maroc appeared in a fur tunic and cotton trousers, the least of a Russian servant's inconsistencies. The arms of the family his own had always served were in golden embroidery on his coat-sleeve, half buried in fur.

"Excellency," he returned pettishly, "the piggish night-mail demands the track and declines to pull private carriages. The Princesses Ganodkin are served—with a poor dinner."

"Summon the new Princess," she said in French, drawing nearer the narrow railway table. She was as typically Russian as a three days' snowfall. Her figure was stout, her shoulders and cheekbones even higher than her ambitions; she was always in church or drinking tea. Her daily garb was in the worst fashion of English tailors, plain as a deal coffin, square and strong. Her white hair shone with skilled care and jewelled pins, diamonds glittered in her shirt-front, and gemmed necklaces were clasped outside her mannish collars. She read all languages.

Her daughter-in-law was a pretty American, evidently admiring the old lady, behind whose chair Maroc took his reverential stand. He smiled at them with the perfect nonchalance of an old retainer. The atmosphere of these august travellers was simple and affectionate.

"We are attached to the 'Vitesse du Nord' in about two hours," the elder woman said.

"After which it is less than thirty to Alexis——"

"And the hatshops," the "Mother-title" answered, with a wonderfully becoming smile.

"I see by day before yesterday's *Figaro*," her daughter-in-law began, dutifully attempting table-talk, "that the son of your old friend,—ah! how shall I pronounce him?—Borovotsky?—who was found dead in Baden, had an æolian. Late the night of his death he played the 'Rakotzky March' on it. The people in the suite heard him, and

a little black cross was found about his neck. This march and a little black cross, the paper said, was the sign, the concerted death-sentence, of the society which killed his father, 'The Brothers Implacable.' Odd, wasn't it?"

Maroc signalled silence from behind his stout mistress. She turned and caught him.

"Get me the *Figaro*," she said. Her lips were white and she drank all her wine without stopping while he brought the paper. She read rapidly, and then looked out on the sluggish Tiesen, which outruns time in that dull province. Her soup cooled before her untasted, and it was good soup. But the details of life were in abeyance, while her bitterest memory was turning in its sleep. The river sent the lingering sun a bright answer; its surface was red and gold, side by side with the iron tracks.

"The Brothers Implacable," she observed, "are the reason we have no bands in Toesk and no market crosses in Tilsit."

Maroc touched the Mother-title on the shoulder.

"Don't," he said entreatingly,—“please don't, Excellency.”

There were streams of tears on his battered Kalmuck face—little streams, vivid in the last sunrays, like the slow-moving river itself.

"My husband," Princess Ganodkin said calmly, "was a victim of the Brothers Implacable. Neither Alexis nor I wished you to know it before you came to Russia. There is no real danger, and yet thoughts of these things are disturbing to strangers. We are going to Paris now, and you might hear it in any salon apropos of Borovotsky."

Princess Alexis was horrified, and yet her pretty face was deeply sympathetic.

"That was in '70, Mother of Alexis?"

The older woman nodded.

"My son was a year old," she said.

"But now," Maroc interrupted, "the concerted signal is barred. If one play the Implacable tune, one is banished; if one 'discover, harbor, create, or borrow a black cross,' one is fined. It is not a national society, it is only a club of Tilsit."

"It grew out of the riots in the sixties. Men dragged the country owners to the market crosses and the bands played 'Rakotzky,' " the Mother-title explained.

Maroc attempted gayety as he changed the plates.

"Assassination is not hereditary," he said soothingly.

"Dear old idiot," his mistress murmured with affection.

The carriage moved on its siding, the night-mail thundered at hand, passed them, racing towards the red west; one star pricked the zenith with its point of light; one thrush sang a spring song from

his thicket; one fear lodged within their hearts,—but the women covered theirs over with the gossip of two continents.

II.

THEIR special engine left them at Gamost when the "Vitesse du Nord" called for them. Lanterns shone on a wilderness of tracks, and stunted oaks shivered in the keen breeze. Even in the dark one observed a local bleakness.

"We get yesterday's papers here," Maroc proclaimed joyfully.

The two Princesses were arranged for the night on sheeted couches, arrayed in black peignoirs and covered with soft furs. Pintsch lights glared hotly from the ceiling, and while the elder woman read the younger knitted.

"Shall I go out and buy the Paris papers?" Maroc asked.

"Don't leave us alone," Princess Alexis said quickly; "send the guard."

Someone tapping on the glass door leading to the platform frightened her to the point of pallor. Maroc opened the door but a tiny crack.

They cried out with pleasure as Prince Alexis Ganodkin entered.

"But I thought you had to be in Paris?" one cried.

"You said you must attend the Commission?" the other questioned.

He looked haggard, but evidently enjoyed their surprise. He had assumed a certain incongruous gayety, a curious contrast to his usual calm. The glaring light fell on him, a man of average height but unusual bulk. His bold and honest eyes were shaded with black brows and lashes, but his hair was soft and fair as a blond child's. His handsome mouth was marred by a thin mustache, almost white and typically Tartar. Everything about his dress expressed a man of Oriental prejudices and British pastimes. He was courteous, brave, and clever.

"I thought you might worry about me," he explained, "when you read of Borovotsky and Lemet. So night before last the younger Maroc flung my clothes into a valise and took our places in the 'Paris to Petersburg' as far as Gamost, where we knew we could catch you. We reached here at noon."

"We only got yesterday's papers here, we do not know about Lemet," the women cried together.

"Well," Alexis said doubtfully, "Lemet was struck in the back of the head at the house of Folle-Fanchette, the danseuse in his opera, you see."

"But the sign," Maroc demanded, "did he see a sign?"

Alexis looked at his wife.

"I told her about it, apropos of Borovotsky," his mother said calmly.

"Oh!" Alexis threw aside his gayety and became circumstantial and grave. "Lemet heard someone whistling 'Rakotzky' under the window. You see, he has our association with the tune. He went to the window and saw a cross of black shadow in the street. Two cabs caused it by standing under street-lamps. That ghastly coincidence is all he remembers. He is in our hotel; they brought him there, and the doctors say he will recover—probably."

"I think it is undoubtedly the Brothers again," the Mother-title exclaimed sadly.

"I have a detective with me," Alexis continued,—“Caron, the best in Paris, I hear. They think that as I also am a son of one of the three men who lost their lives in trying to break up Nihilism I may be attacked. So this Caron goes about with me. Poor Lemet! think, his first opera to be produced and he knocked up anonymously. The ballet-master is a Nihilist and was arrested on suspicion, but he proved an alibi and was discharged. His work is invaluable to the opera. I'm delighted he isn't guilty."

The train had moved away as he spoke. Maroc's son and the detective boarded the carriage, the guard turned the key.

"I have seen you before," the old lady said as her eyes fell on Caron.

"No, Madame la Princesse." He uncovered and stood before her in the glare.

"You do not look French."

"I am so."

"We need your help in the care of my child," she said again more graciously. Her cheeks were bright red, like autumn leaves. She read about Lemet in all the papers the guard could buy. She sent Caron to Maroc's salon.

"You have taken a dislike to him," Alexis whispered.

When the lights were turned down they slept a little, and the train, shrieking now and then, still rushed southwestward, a glowing projectile slung across the night.

III.

THE Parisian Hôtel Ganodkin had been newly decorated for Princess Alexis. Its long rooms were a mirrored maze, wherein splendid toilettes flashed through clouds of cigarette smoke. Caron wandered reflectively to and fro when the Prince and Princesses received, otherwise he merely shadowed Alexis Prentorowitch when he went out on errands of diplomacy, for the morning's ride, or for an hour in the "Cercle Cosmopolite." He had his room in their hotel and played a fourth with them at their eternal "Bridge" game, if there were no

one else at hand. He showed an apathetic approval of his charge sometimes, and when the Princesses asked him questions, hoping to be reassured of the Prince's safety, he would never say more than "No attempt on his life will be made unless the sign is given. You look upon it as a warning of the victim to make his peace with God. It is also an order to his executioner, who has been following him, perhaps for months."

"But you are sure no one shadows him?"

"No one but me, Mesdames. Except in his own house or in his carriage with you or some other trusted persons, he is always within sight."

"That man makes me feel secure," the new Princess would say gladly.

Paris was agog over Lemet's experience and the death of Borovtsky, and Paris resents sorrow in the spring season; the spring season is for flirtation, racing, bonnets, and cafés. Men would say to each other as they drove from the Ganodkins: "They are welcome to their vogue. If Ganodkin won the Grand Prix, it wouldn't cure him of looking for black crosses and listening for that unpronounceable death-march."

All the women visitors said sad things too. But then no woman admits a young wife to be as happy as she seems, and, besides, they envied her the Ganodkin victoria, which experts called the smartest in Europe.

Early on Good Friday, when the draped churches were collecting their earliest worshippers, this equipage, containing the Mother-title, drew up at the dingy "residence" of M. Rias, "Directeur des Officiers," the omnipresent Rias of the Secret Police.

Her tiny groom rang his bell, and soon she sat opposite the great detective in the early morning light.

"I have written you every day for eight days," she said angrily, "and this is the first moment you appoint a meeting."

"I did not know until yesterday that I had such a distinguished correspondent. Every morning I received a letter signed 'Sophé.' Not knowing her Excellency's device,—I confess it!—I thought myself in touch with a stocking person, if her Excellency permits it, a corset person."

"Pig!" the Princess cried violently, "if you'd known I was a princess you would have attended to me? And the little dressmakers are not granted interviews with republican administrators? One does not need to visit theatres to see farces, sir! You are a farce."

Rias was rarely in the wrong, but, adjusting himself to novel circumstances, he apologized so gracefully that he was forgiven. The

Princess then came to the point. "I wish you to displace Caron, my son's shadow," she said simply.

"That is as if one asked Holland to remove its dykes," he cried. "Why?"

"I distrust him. He joined us in my private carriage at Gamost." The Princess was like all good women when about to relate anything: she always got a good ways back of her story, that she might protract the pleasure of narration. "When he entered my carriage I said, 'I have seen you before.' I could not remember where. But in the middle of the night the face his resembled jumped to my mind, and it was the face of the agitator who founded the Brothers Implacable."

Rias smiled scornfully. "Caron is at most thirty-six," he returned patiently, "and if the criminal you mention were alive he would be over eighty."

"That does not prevent a horrible likeness between these men," she answered.

"I have even seen an English servant who looked like Peter the Great. Oh, her Excellency merely wishes to establish a likeness."

"This likeness was in my mind," she continued, "when I determined to look into Maroc's salon for another sight of this Caron. The door was open, so that we could call if anything were wanted in the night. We were in comparative darkness, but I thought I could see without being seen. Raising myself on my sofa, I looked through the open door to find your detective with a pocket electric lantern, 'type mignonne,' rifling a tin box of mine which I rarely lock. He was reading a list of my investments! I called Maroc. Caron came in his place. 'Your servant is sleeping,' he said. 'Is there a tin box in there?' I inquired. 'I will see,' he replied. He returned with it. I locked it for the first time in years—with its own key, which I carry with others on my key-ring. He was as calm as a May morning."

"Excellent, Excellency! very good indeed!" Rias laughed. "To guard you, this man must know all. I could do nothing but praise him for such investigation. I think his zeal ill-timed, but yet, Excellency, it is laudable!"

The Princess interrupted him with a grand gesture. "I believe there are better detectives than this one," she said. "I think he is a Nihilist himself. Oh, yes, M. Rias, I know them by sight, as you know a criminal of ordinary guilt, as a doctor knows measles. Send me his record in your department. I believe you will be unable to furnish his history except while he has served you. Nihilists have no pasts for publication. Good-morning."

"That woman is a lunatic!" Rias exclaimed when he had closed the door.

IV.

CARON'S record arrived the next day. M. Rias knew nothing of him prior to his service in the Secret Police. "He may have been an English clergyman, he may have been a king," Rias wrote. The Princess was so angry she could not eat her breakfast. An American newspaper had offered a prize to anyone discovering the murderer of an American millionaire, poisoned in Lucerne. M. Caron won that prize, and so cleverly that it attracted Rias's attention. Caron at length joined his force, where he had been distinguished. M. Rias had known him six years. The Princess rang her bell.

"Where does M. Caron sleep?" she asked Maroc, who answered it.

"In this house, in the room that M. Lemet occupied before he was moved to his own apartment."

"You may go."

She consulted Rias's letter once more. He wrote that in removing Caron he felt he would be threatening the Prince's life. He virtually wrote that he would not remove him. Rising, the old woman sought Caron's room; she had seen him go out with her son on foot.

The room was dimly lighted; its windows, opening on the service court, were close-shuttered. Boxes, all locked, were ranged against the wall; a valise was unlocked, and the Princess found it packed. There was nothing in the drawers of his chiffonnière, no toothbrush, even, in his dressing-room, and all his luggage was stamped "F. Brown, New York." "He could leave at a moment's notice," the Princess said to herself. "It must be time to strike." She felt sure that Caron's was the hand. "Does a man who is subject to fits analyze his symptoms when they warn him of an attack? Not he. I am subject to Nihilists," she said as she left the room, "and I know what to expect of this one."

She went into her son's room. The Princess Alexis was there, whiter than her peignoir; horror widened her eyes; she could not stand, but sank weakly on a stiff chair beside a brazier.

"Where is Caron?" she asked the Mother-title, "I have something for him."

The Princess snatched a little paper from the girl's cold hand. It was a diagram of the opera-house, and against their box a Greek cross was marked in black ink.

"Is it not terrible?" Princess Alexis asked.

"Where did you find it?" the Mother-Princess demanded rapidly.

"In the hall. Lemet or no Lemet, Alexis must not go to his opera on Monday evening."

"No, he must not. But, again, this is no warning."

Princess Alexis looked surprised. "It is the sign," she objected.

"They haven't played their silly tune yet," the old lady answered;

"they behave like a church with their ritual. This paper belongs to Caron. I have discovered him. He is an Implacable. Oh, yes, I tell you this, I can prove it. He will miss this; its meaning is plain; he will want it again—oh, fearfully! He will miss it directly and return for it. It was for some accomplice, no doubt. He will abandon the plan of which it was a part, but he will leave Alexis unprotected anywhere to come search for this. If you love Alexis, tell Caron *nothing!*"

The Princess Alexis looked at the old woman with frank disbelief. "But he is a detective, the sworn foe of secret clubs. Do not be unjust to him, our one safeguard. Besides, he is so meek. These truculent butchers are different; you yourself called them truculent."

"I called them so?" the Mother-title cried, laughing in her intrepid fashion,—there was a general dauntlessness about her which grew at each moment,—“perhaps I did call them so. I just call them what I please when I feel like it. Come.”

She drew the younger woman towards the corridor. "Did he call for Alexis, or did they meet at the main door?"

"He called for Alexis here, in his room."

The Princess threw the diagram down on the red carpet of the corridor; the pink azaleas threw their glow upon the white paper until it was rosy. "Tinged with blood," the old lady whispered exultingly, as if that chance color were a proof of Caron's intent. Princess Alexis thought her crazy, perhaps this awful strain—— She caught the Mother-title's hand and kissed it, convinced that anxiety had unhinged a noble mind. Ten minutes passed, the two women, hid in the Prince's room, looking out on the sunlit corridor. Presently steps were heard on the stairway, a quick voice questioned one of the lackeys, and then the steps came on. Caron turned into the corridor; his face was white, anxious; he looked from right to left, left to right, but still walked without loitering. He stooped, picked up the diagram, and moved on towards his room. There was an air of relief in his back, his shoulders seemed straighter.

"Now, don't faint," the Princess Ganodkin said hurriedly, "but get me a pair of socks, a pair of pumps, a shirt, cravat, evening clothes, everything belonging to Alexis. Bring them, dearest child, to my boudoir, and tell Alexis nothing. Tell Caron nothing. Maroc knows all and agrees with me."

"I don't believe Caron is a Nihilist," the girl said tearfully.

"Well, you will," the old lady answered good-naturedly. "Get what I said, and be quick, dear."

She moved towards her boudoir, stopping suddenly to laugh with real mirth. "That pig Rias! what an idiot it is!" she said grimly.

When the Princess Alexis brought a portion of her husband's wardrobe to his mother's boudoir she felt convinced of the madness of that

elderly potentate. For herself, she feared to give Caron her confidence, much less Alexis, but to give her husband's clothes into the keeping of the Mother-title seemed a harmless idiocy. Her slim arms were draped with pantaloons, she carried an opera-hat crushed convulsively against her side, and on entering the room the Princess Ganodkin was visible at the centre-table, her Greek testament open before her, her lips twitching with deep emotion. She knitted quietly enough at an afghan, pretending to be at ease. "I hate everything sensational so!" she exclaimed. "I must relax like this, or die of excitement. Thank you, little Clotheshorse," she added, nodding towards her son's garments; "throw them on the divan."

"Will you tell me what you're going to do with them?" Princess Alexis inquired anxiously.

"Watch Maroc, that will tell you better than I can; he will be here presently."

When Maroc came he brought a stranger with him, a short, fat man, with whom the Mother-title spoke Dutch. The Princess Alexis, not understanding the language, stood silent in despairing wonderment.

They went into the dressing-room, where the stout stranger moved about in a business-like way, unwrapping a box of paints, and putting strange little trowels and dull knives with flexible blades into a neat row on the washhand-stand. A high press, carved upon the whole of its available surface, six feet in height at the least, and with double doors, spoke loudly of Russia from the midst of modern French furnishing. The stranger fitted a key to this press and opened its door. "This was all my idea," the Princess Ganodkin said complacently. Maroc rushed to the window. "Caron has just gone out again," he said.

The Princess Alexis did not even feel she was dreaming. What passed before her eyes seemed more remote than that. She felt that she watched another dream, as the two men lifted a sheeted tailor's dummy from the press, standing it in the middle of the room. No wig was on its head as yet, and a great hole above the neck gaped brainless to the ceiling. The little man produced a wig from under his coat-tails; it capped the likeness suddenly. "Perfect, Excellency!" Maroc cried. "Admirable!" her Excellency grunted. "What a mockery!" the Princess Alexis said, covering her eyes with her hand. Princess Ganodkin smiled her wonderfully becoming smile, but said nothing.

"In this case," Maroc said, as though he were instructing in a university,— "in this case the blow cannot be dealt Alexis Prentorowitch in his own house. Two of the lackeys are detectives, so the order to strike must also be given out-of-doors. This Society of Implacables signs its infamies to intimidate."

"Intimidation is the pet weapon of Nihilism."

"He talks like a shilling shocker," the Princess Ganodkin said in English.

"Also," Maroc continued, "the blow cannot be dealt while they are in the coupé together, for I am always on the box. I would not let him escape alive. These rascals are few and do not risk their lives, as once they did, lest they die out. They will attack Alexis Prentorowitch when he is with his——"

"You talk too much!" the Mother-title said sternly. Maroc had spoken Russian that the Dutchman might not understand. He forgot the new Princess, white and absorbed, beside him.

"We are going for a drive now," the elder woman continued quietly, "and when we come in I hope to hear that the dummy is dressed and hidden in the stable. When the coupé calls to take me to M. Lemet's opera, see that the dummy is in the left corner. Be thou on the box, Maroc, and until Monday evening comes I shall give no further orders, unless my plan is changed."

She put gold in the stranger's hand, and the two women left the boudoir for a turn in the sunshine amongst the other women who had left their troubles at home to keep house by themselves.

V.

THE Princess Ganodkin had arrived at a definite conclusion, that the time chosen to attack her son would be while he drove with her or with his wife. His sleeping-hours were thrice guarded, by his wife and Maroc and one of the detectives—four times guarded if one count Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps. And the Ganodkins were devout, after the most perfervid fashion of the Green communion. She was determined that he should not go to Lemet's opera; the crowds and darkness, the long tail of carriages creeping towards a blinding light, the confused cries, the ensemble of a first night, seemed perfect conditions for assassination without arrest. Thirty years before the murderer would not ask his own life, but avengers had grown scarce, even in Russia. She was sure Caron would try to escape, sure that he would not turn on Alexis if he were alone with him. Each night she thought of it all in a dreary routine. Caron tasted his food, which prevented poisoning; Caron opened letters and parcels, which foiled infernal machines; her own precaution against murder had demanded one untried confederate. She often wondered if the Dutch wax worker would tell of his activity in the Hôtel Ganodkin. Easter Sunday was gay with flowers and visits; Lemet drove to mass and the papers rang with it; Ganodkin went also, as recorded in the society columns of four cities. It was also recorded that Lemet was forbidden to attend his first night by his physicians. Monday wore away in anxiety; the

Princess Alexis was ill from shock and fretting. "Humor her," the Doctor said. "We never do anything else," they answered simply. "Well, Prince, in short, stay at home from this opera; the thought of that crowd being the cover of an assassin——" "Dear child," Prince Alexis said, looking enormously gratified. "Well, Doctor, we shall see what can be done. Thank you for the hint. Good-morning."

The Mother-title drummed on the table when the Doctor left them. "Friendship demands that you go to Lemet's opera. Don't tell even Caron that you won't go. You know these newspapers. Suppose they imputed cowardice to us, and said *you* feared the crowd? Just send Caron on ahead and tell him to meet us without fail on the steps of the house, not even in the foyer, but as we alight. Then change your mind at the last moment, so no one will know, and your wife's sudden illness can be your plea."

"That is best," Alexis agreed; "newspaper innuendo would be the last straw."

Within her own room the Princess Ganodkin was feeble and unnerved; with her family and servants she was pale and vague, but perfectly serene. Her one fear was that Alexis would tell Caron his plan.

About six on the afternoon of Monday the drawing-rooms were full of visitors; the Prince was playing piquet in an anteroom; a fresh voice sang elaborately, trilling in scales from the *salon de musique*. Caron moved to and fro, observing, unobserved, like a cat deciding the excellencies and drawbacks of its habitat. One of the lackeys entered the room with a black iron cross. A tiny tin box was added to its under side, and although it had no wrapper, a tag, type-written, consigned it to Prince Alexis Ganodkin, in the French designation, without his father's name attached. The Mother-title snatched it; Caron had gone to look in at the card-room. A little lever put forth from the tiny tin box at the reverse of the cross; she pushed it and the strains of "Rakotzky" tinkled in the room under cover of the trilling voice. "A musical box," she said lightly, with white lips.

"My orders are to take everything to M. Caron," the lackey said as the Mother-title put the cross on a table. She gave him the thing gladly, glad also that the Princess Alexis had not been downstairs to see it arrive.

In another moment the Prince rushed to her, holding it in his hand. "Caron thinks it a joke," he said; "don't worry. Some fool has been trying to frighten me."

"Do you think it a joke?" the Princess asked solemnly of Caron.

"Ye-es, a grim joke," he answered. "Is it your wish that we act on it? All possible precaution is taken, why be alarmed?"

"Put the thing out of sight!" the Prince said nervously, "and see that the news of it goes no further."

Maroc said it was the sign. "You know it is no joke," he said doggedly, crossing himself with terrorized prayers.

The Prince dined alone with his mother; her heart knocked at the jewelled opening of her corsage as if it would leap from her into the room. Her lips, which framed prayers, rejected food. She had ordered a special guard to surround the opera-box. It was the drive she feared. The minutes wore on towards the one which was to witness her departure. The Prince went upstairs to his wife, first calling Caron, who waited in the hall. "You go to the opera first. Wait for us at the steps. To be frank, Caron, I wish to see you the moment the coupé door is opened."

"You will, Excellency. Au 'voir."

The Princess Ganodkin watched him from the window upstairs. A lackey called his fiacre, he stepped into it, and was gone. She rushed to his room; there was no luggage there but an old trunk, apparently overflowing with soiled cravats, unlocked.

Maroc was behind her in his redingote, ready for the box of her coupé. "Yes, Excellency, his things were moved while you were at dinner. He had a new name painted on everything. It is time to go."

"Good-night, Alexis."

She paused at his door. He sat on the edge of his wife's lounge and waved his hand to her.

"Do not come down, I have Maroc; stay within doors," she said.

Presently she took her place in the coupé, beside the dummy.

VI.

"You are not bad," she said to it. "Lean forward—so."

It seemed very real in the darkness. The ribbon of Michael crossed its heartless shirt-front. Maroc had put some other orders on it, which glittered if they passed a street-lamp. Somehow the first shock of learning the Implacables were at work again returned to her. The account of Borovotsky in the *Figaro*, the slow-running Tiesen, her vis-à-vis in travel, the prospective widow of her only son, were sad items of tragedy. She put her hand protectingly on the dummy. "You won't feel anything, you know," she said kindly, "and you do help me so in the care of my child."

Her mind ran forward to meeting Madame Lemet in the opera-box. She must get ready details of a story of Alexis's absence; she leaned back in her corner, inventing them. Presently they took their place in the line; it was the longest line she could remember; she tried to reckon her distance from the door of the opera-house. She noticed that Maroc had left the box and was standing on the pavement. He opened the door of the coupé. "I've seen him—across the street," he said, closing it again.

Then the other door opened; Caron put in his head and shoulders. He said nothing, but struck the dummy in the chest, with a heavy, tearing noise. The Princess caught at him, but he slammed the door and was off. She screamed, Maroc wrenched his door wide, and they looked at the dummy's wound: the ribbon of Michael was rent by a modern poniard, sharper than a razor.

"Give the alarm; let him think himself successful," the Princess commanded. They screamed together: "A doctor! a doctor!" "Murder!" Holding the dummy in her arms, she screened him from the crowd. Maroc kept people from the coupé by fierce demands of air for the victim.

Rias rushed from the Café Brillante. "Is this possible?" he cried in horror, tearing along the pavement.

"Come into the carriage and tell my man to drive us to the Doctor's," the old woman said serenely at sight of him. "I was right about Caron."

The Mother-title Ganodkin wakes at night with the memory of Caron's blow on the dummy chest and her horror of his dagger. She goes to sleep again laughing at M. Rias. She bet with him, the wager being that he would never learn a word of Caron before he joined the Secret Police or after he took French leave of it. The Brothers Implacable continue to dispatch the obnoxious at long intervals and after serving them with the sign. Her friends fear for the Princess Ganodkin, who says serenely, "Somehow, I feel they will not molest us again." M. Rias is her valued friend.



HOW COULD I KNOW ?

BY H. TALBOT KUMMER

HOW could I know that you were Love,
 You! humble hooded figure in the snow?
 My eyes were lifted far above
 Thy pleading, outstretched hands, thy look of woe.

I deemed thee but a beggar, far
 Below the vision of my dream, and so,
 While seeking thee as some high star,
 I passed thee by. Ah Love! how could I know?

HIRAM MATHEWS'S MONUMENT

By Clinton Dangerfield



"AIN'T no feller so meachen but what he can leave some sorter remembrance behind him if he's a mind to—sort of monymment, as it were."

Hiram's sister, tall, angular, dominant, paused in reply on her way to the sink, to which she had already begun to convey the dirty dishes, though Hiram Mathews had not finished his breakfast.

"I declare for't," she said scornfully, "you *do* git the queerest idees, Hiram. Jest look at yourself—you allers wuz the runt of the family, and you ain't hardly been able to scrape a livin' fer us two here in the village by thet clerkship of yours. Yit here you be talkin' of leavin' a monymment—suthin' for folks to remember ye by!"

"I do the best I can with the clerkin', Statira," returned her brother, swallowing a sigh. "You'd ort to bear in mind that money-makin' is a gift—comes natural to some folks and not to other some, no matter how they work. But money-makin' ain't the question, Statira. The idee is fer each to do a leetle suthin' to live—afterwards." He paused distressfully, lacking words to express what he meant. "I don't want to pass away entirely—every scrap of me forgot here in Greenville. I want people to say, 'Hiram thought of us when he planted those.'"

"Planted *what*?"

"Trees! I'm goin' to have a green monymment, Statira—in Greenville." He chuckled faintly, despite the open contempt on his sister's face.

She whisked off the remainder of the plates angrily.

"Fer clean, unnatural foolishness," she declared, "you are the beatenist!"

Thereafter the newly developed lunacy of the stoop-shouldered little middle-aged clerk was notorious in Greenville—Greenville, who did not deserve her name, for she was forlornly destitute of greenness.

Dusty and bare were her streets, dusty and bare her yards. The few exceptions in spots did but make the desolation of the whole place more pointed. But now, before "opening time" in the morning and after "closing time" in the evening, a bent figure, with a spade in one

hand and a little forest scion in the other, might be seen carefully selecting a proper site for his treasure.

Most people made no objections to this continuous planting. It did no harm and amused the clerk, for whom everyone felt a kind of condescending pity.

Hiram was sixty when the last of his trees were planted—he was eighty when they had grown to fair, broad-leaved, straight-limbed saplings, whose even lines and well-chosen varieties were beginning to create a marvellous difference in the appearance of Greenville. Daily the old man, now no longer a worker, wandered up and down the streets whenever the weather permitted, looking with eyes of infinite gladness upon the beautiful, living columns of his monument.

His idea was still a jest with Greenville. It continued so until one memorable afternoon, when her chief citizens found themselves facing a very earnest speaker in the Town Hall.

"As you are aware," the latter was saying, "it is now a question whether our railroad will run through your village or through Annapole, fifteen miles to your left. You are also aware that the routes are so equal in advantages touching construction that it now becomes a matter of which village is, *per se*, the more desirable—which will be the greater credit to the road. I have determined on Greenville."

Enthusiastic cheering shook the hall. The townsfolk had long and eagerly coveted a railroad. They were shrewd enough to see that Greenville was dying of inanition—that she must be fed by stores and new interests brought by the power of the tireless steam and steel. They had trembled in their boots lest Annapole get it—and Annapole had been so insolently cocksure that they had trembled all the more! When the cheering subsided the speaker resumed:

"I will now tell you why I decided on Greenville"—an impressive pause, and then he added pointedly: "It is because I was delighted to see that you appreciate the commercial value of beauty."

The Greenvillians stared stupidly at one another. What did the man mean? Was this irony?

"This important side of progress," continued the Dictator, "is overlooked or neglected in nine sections out of ten. It seems impossible to convince the average citizen that the 'Open, Sesame,' to an investor's pocket is a trim, well-shaded town. I do not deny that your village leaves something to be remedied. Your front yards do not match your remarkably beautiful and promising avenues of trees."

The stranger lifted a glass of water near him. Perhaps this prevented him from seeing how very redfaced the Greenvillians had suddenly become, or how an aged, wrinkled countenance, very much in the rear, became suffused with sudden, innocent light. Not that Hiram felt one touch of rejoicing over the manifest discomfiture of his brother

citizens or of triumph in his unexpected victory. His was rather the pure joy of one who perceived that his work is understood.

"Your trees," pursued the speaker crisply, "make me confident that you will remedy the defects I shall point out to you. So now, in the name of your well-shaded streets, which will yearly increase in beauty until your children's children will bless your forethought for posterity, I congratulate you on your acquisition of the railroad, and thereby of prosperity!"

He was about to descend after this imposing flourish when Squire Warren, the most distinguished of Greenville's citizens, gathering his courage, rose bravely to the occasion.

"Mr. Lanham," he said a little thickly, "before ye go away I want ye sh'd know that the credit of them trees——"

"Belongs to *all* Greenville," said a clear, eager voice, rising above the weakness of age. "That all of us love 'em and will tend 'em alike." After which Hiram collapsed in much confusion.

There was a supper given that night. Not to the Dictator of Railroad Paths, either! For at the head of the table sat a beaming and happy old man, to whom healths were drunk recklessly and often in the hardest of hard cider.

He is at rest now. He sleeps under the trees he loved so well, while they (through sweet summer rains and golden sunshine) wax yearly into greater loveliness and strength.



JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

GREATEST of modern painters, he is dead!—
 Whistler, in whom death seemed to have no part:
 He of the nimble wit and jocund heart,
 Who sipped youth's nectar at the fountain-head,
 And felt its wine through all his veins run red:
 Who worshipped the ideal—not the mart,
 And blessed the world with an imperial Art,
 Whereby who longs for beauty may be fed!

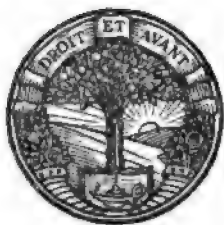
When things men deem momentous are forgot,
 Laurels will bloom for him that wither not,
 And Death's inverted torch shall fail to smother
 The light of genius, tender and sublime,
 Which with austere restraint, and for all time,
 Painted the gentle portrait of the "Mother"!

THE FASCINATING OF MR. SAVAGE

BY

HELEN MILECETE

AUTHOR OF "A DETACHED PIRATE,"
"A GIRL OF THE NORTH," ETC.



PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1903

**COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

DECEMBER, 1903



THE FASCINATING OF MR. SAVAGE

BY HELEN MILECETE

Author of "A Detached Pirate," "A Girl of the North," etc.

I

"I AM going to float a company. I must do something!"

"Do," said Mrs. Norton. She nestled into her cushions of pale blue satin and hid one ear in the frills. "Get George to help you; he is the best man I ever knew to float things that are er—er——"

"Oh! my company is to be a limited company and it won't be er—er—— There will be only one shareholder. It is a real company. Don't fidget so."

"Have you made up the prospectus?"

"Yes, for private circulation only. The prospects are fair; the results may be millions!" She spoke in the grandiloquent tone one uses when relating the superiority of a hair-restorer or a complexion-wash. "The name is the Black Adela Co., Limited!"

Mrs. Norton sat up. "What does it mean?" she asked plaintively.

"Black Adela, whose beauty is unappreciated by an ungrateful and non-discriminating country, has beautiful hair, blue eyes, a complexion which, if it were assisted, might figure as immaculate in the society news of the papers or in the advertisement columns of the *Lady's*——"

"Good Heaven, Adela! are you quite cracked? Or are you thinking of opening an oil and color shop? Have you invented a new thing for the skin? What are you going to do?"

"Nothing of that sort. I am going to float myself." She spoke slowly and with deliberation.

"Float yourself!" For once Mrs. Norton's sweet voice was shrill. "Are you going to float in a bathing-dress or on a raft? Who will pay? How will you make any money?"

"I shall stake my all. Listen!" She continued as if she were reading aloud, "A good figure, excellent feet, a charming manner, with magnetism thrown in, and——"

"Rot not left out," interrupted Mrs. Norton. "What are you driving at? Why, you look as if you were going to cry!"

"Listen, Gerty. I am twenty-seven."

"Don't say it so loud. Everyone knows I am older than you are. I am well aware of your age, but you don't look it. You can be twenty-seven for ages yet, twenty-three to a man who adores you, twenty sometimes. Why, I knew——"

"Yes," interrupted Adela, "I know you did. That woman had money. It is impossible to be permanently twenty without money. I am getting thin, I am losing my looks, I am vegetating while I am young, and life is passing. Do you remember that old tune we used to sing as a part-song at school? 'Carnival's passing—passing away?' That is in my head all day. It is true; my Carnival—my youth—is passing, passing away. I can hear fate singing it always, and I want to live, to be——"

"Do add, 'to suffer.' It pains me to hear my childhood's maxims misquoted. Of course you will suffer. Whereas, if you just sat down and waited patiently, you don't know what might happen to you."

"Wait? For what? For the Judgment Day."

"Marry," said Mrs. Norton lazily. She let her head sink in the blue frills again.

"Marry! Marry!" repeated her friend with scorn. "You talk as if it were as easy to get a husband as it is to advertise for a cook."

"I assure you that it is much easier to get a husband than it is to get a cook," answered Mrs. Norton.

"Who would you suggest should lead me to the altar? Which one of my few admirers? The clerk in the drug store? He must get fifteen dollars a week. The man at the bank? How would you like him? Would any of the others do? They come to see me to yarn. But they are married! They would have to take me to Salt Lake City to join the Mormons because, strangely enough, a man is not allowed to have two wives in this country. All the men I know are poor or else married."

"I know this place is poky and dull, but I want you to come and spend the summer with me at Murray Bay."

"How could I? My mother-in-law would be so hurt if she saw me with your party. You are not considered a wise counsellor in the lodge of my in-laws."

"They don't pay your rent. Why should you care what they think?"

"I am weak-minded. I cannot bear to hurt people's feelings."

"You are afraid of that old harridan."

"I am," said Adela, "I am terrified of her. I am going to London."

"You are going to London?" Mrs. Norton was breathless. "To London! What for?"

"To float the company."

"You—Adela Percy, widow, pretty,—no, you aren't pretty, but sometimes I think you have more fascination than mere prettiness,—are going to London to run a—— Is it a shop you are thinking of starting?"

"Yes, a shop."

"What are you going to sell?"

"Myself."

"Good Heaven, Adela! I don't call that a joke."

"I do not mean it to be a joke. Do I look like a joke?"

Mrs. Norton glared at her. Adela wore a long, plain, black gown; there was no touch of white anywhere on it; her hair was done low on her neck; her blue eyes were full of tears; she looked as if she were going to cry; her face was strained and her ridiculous baby mouth was set and hard.

"You do not look at all like a joke," said Mrs. Norton. "You do not look pretty."

"I feel mouldy," said Adela, "as if I were damp and covered with clogging furry stuff, just like jam when it's going bad. You can shudder, but I feel it. Dear Gerty, you have been so good to me, you won't tell, will you?"

"I'll tell George. I never keep anything from him."

Adela laughed—the involuntary laugh of one who is overtaken by sudden amusement. "George does not matter. You won't mention it to the others?"

"No, I swear that. But go on, I am tired of waiting. When you have anything to say, say it, that is my motto."

"I am starting for London on the twenty-seventh of March. I sail from Boston in the Amsterdam. You know my life, how hard I have had to work?"

The other nodded and said, "You seemed as if you liked it."

"Of course. I am not such a fool as to tell what I felt. The woman who talks courts ridicule. But I loathed it. When he, Bertram, took me away from it all and married me I did not much mind being married."

"You didn't much mind being married?" repeated Gerty. "Most women like it. A husband means a house; there is someone to pay your bills, and—well, it means other young men and opportunities."

"I don't care for men; I never like anything in lumps, and an individual man between a woman and her husband makes war. The opportunities you don't want are no good to you. I know lots of women marry to have Mrs. on their cards and on their tombstones——"

"Go on," jeered Gerty.

"It is refreshing to have a house of your own and your own way most of the day, but marriage spells misery if you don't love the man; to accept him for what he can give and not for what he is, is a good way of going to meet disaster.

"I don't like your picture." Mrs. Norton's tone was icy. "I never saw one like it; it reminds me of a common chromo-lithograph. I think you are trying to illustrate my motives."

"I am not," answered Adela wearily. "I—— Do you know that I loved Bertram? I could have killed him when he went off to South Africa and left me. I could, not because he went away, but because he wanted to go. I would rather have seen him dead than going away from me living, for he volunteered."

"You are a funny mixture. I never thought you felt it as much as that. You always seemed resigned, heartless."

"When a woman keeps her head and her eyes are dry men and women call her heartless. He left me alone, and I got thirty dollars a month from Ottawa as a reminder that I was Mrs. Percy and he had left some money for me. He sent me a letter on a dirty sheet of paper now and then, and I had to wait, to wait—for what? For the rubbishy news we get here about the war and—it was like the Judgment Day and New Year's Day rolled into one. Despair, desperation, and good resolutions were all jumbled up together in my brain; I felt as if it would burst."

"He was very fond of you."

"I was very fond of him, you mean. He sailed away into the night and I was alone, and—well, you know that he was killed at Pardeberg. I got a little pension, but from being prosperous I became poor, lonely. He left me one thousand pounds, nearly five thousand dollars—it sounds more in dollars. Now I am twenty-seven, I will never love anyone again——"

Mrs. Norton gave a sound which resembled a chuckle.

"Never!" asseverated Adela. "You can laugh. If I had any feeling left, if I felt there was any chance of my loving again, do you think that I *would*, that I *could*, do what I am going to do?"

"You haven't told me yet what you are going to do."

"I am afraid you will tell."

"All right, then, keep your secret buried in your own heart. I don't want to know it. I should hate to be entrusted with a secret which, if told, would bring disaster to any happy home. A secret which could hurt any woman could never rest happily in my soul."

"Woman! What woman could it hurt?"

"Aren't you planning an elopement?"

"Didn't I tell you that I could never love anyone again?"

"Alas! that announcement is generally the prelude to some awful and contraband act. I think you have made up your mind to elope with a married man."

"I always knew you were an idiot," said Adela.

"Explain quickly," said Gerty. "Do not deviate from the truth. Though, Adela, I think you are making a mistake; it is not wise to strip your soul for a woman to look at."

"I suppose I ought to tell you what I mean to do without giving you any reason for it. Still, Gerty, I can trust you."

"Trust no woman, howe'er pleasant," said Gerty. "Notice my addition to the poet's lines."

"I have sold the bonds in which my five thousand dollars were invested. I have that sum in the bank now, and I am going to take it out and seek my fortune. Don't interrupt me." Gerty had her mouth open, but she shut it again. "I am going to invest my capital in myself, in my clothes, in my own personal adornment! I am going out into the Arena to find a husband, or else to the workhouse—when my money is all spent."

"Arenas are dangerous. You are not used to a crowd nor to the noise."

"I know, but I may as well go and try my luck. I am going to England on a good ship—not too quick a liner, but on a good, substantial steamer on which the-not-rushed-for-time people travel. I am not bad looking, and I will marry anyone who can support me. How could I even contemplate this——"

"If you were not mad? You were not going to say that? I beg your pardon, I naturally thought it was the only finish possible to your sentence."

"How could I even think of it," continued Adela, "if my heart were not dead—dead and cold, in a grave somewhere?"

"You are only twenty-seven. Did you know that some wise man said a woman's strongest passions come on her when she is thirty-five? That is why most divorced women are over thirty."

"Passion!" said Adela contemptuously.

"Oh, yes," said Gerty. "You talk of passion as if it were the plague. Wait! You mention your heart as if it were an iron cross you had erected; as if nothing could alter the shape, nor the form, nor the inscription on it. Don't you know that a hurricane could blow it down? One night's awful storm could lay it flat on the ground and cover the—what you think everlasting—inscription with water and mud. Your heart is not dead, and someone else might soften it so that it would be possible to put another word on it. You talk as if it were made of granite, like Cleopatra's Needle, and fixed up on the

Thames Embankment with policemen round it. Go home, take two pills, and don't come near me for a week."

Mrs. Percy put on her hat and walked down the one street of the little town to the custom-house. She paid thirty dollars' duty on two gowns and had them sent to her boarding-house by the expressman. Then she sent a draft to the steamer's agents in Boston for one hundred and fifty dollars; this was to pay for her cabin on the Amsterdam.

She spent the rest of the day tearing up letters. She cried over some of them, but she decided that was weak of her. Bury the dead and march home to the quickstep, that was the line she meant to take. She did not try on the new gowns until the next day, and when she arrayed herself in them she decided at 128 New Bond Street they had done her work well. The investment of the first part of her capital looked better than dull, ugly bonds. She gave a little skip for pure self-admiration.

She did not go near Mrs. Norton for three days, and at the end of the third Mrs. Norton telephoned to her.

"Come down and dine to-morrow night. We are leaving the next day by the maritime express. Are you sane?"

"I will come to dinner," said Mrs. Percy, and she laughed a little. "I am still the same."

Arrayed in one of her new frocks (the other was for the steamer, and it was short, smart; there were shoes, stockings, and a hat to go with it), Adela walked down to the hotel.

"You were not in earnest," said Gerty. "You have given up that mad scheme of yours. You look sweet, ducky, lovely, in that gown. How becoming black and white is to your skin. You are not going to London; that gown will do for Murray Bay."

"I have taken my passage—I sail in a week," said Adela.

"You will have no luck," said Gerty.

Adela only smiled. "I am not going for luck," she said calmly. "I want something less ephemeral than luck. I am going to look for a situation. Marriage is the best profession for a woman, and I am going to try and get a suitable place in the profession. Why not?"

Mrs. Norton did not answer her.

"Have you anything to send to Mrs. van Ingen? I'll go to see her."

Mrs. Norton looked critically at Adela, and she decided in her wrath and amazement that Mrs. Percy's hair was dyed. No woman was ever born with blue eyes and black hair! Such an effective combination must have been engineered; the hair was colored, for not even a wizard had ever invented such a thing for the eyes. Gerty was annoyed; she had made her own arrangements for Murray Bay, and she had intended that Adela should assume the care of her children and her husband while she amused herself in other ways. That night she wrote

to her sister, Mrs. van Ingen—the Mrs. van Ingen from whom Adela expected so much.

II.

THEY were taking in the gangway. That means a lot. The last link with the land was going. Adela stood on the promenade deck of the Amsterdam and felt an impulse to bolt ashore. There was no one to see her off; how could there be? She felt lonely, frightened, friendless, and unprotected. In all her life she had never gone anywhere alone. The casual glances thrown on her by strangers made her feel hot and cold. Did they think she was an adventuress? An adventuress! The truth of that name as applied to herself made her uncomfortable. A few ardent spirits on the wharf were waving handkerchiefs to some of the passengers. The tugs were snuffing round the big ship, gradually turning her round. Adela looked at the land and at the houses in the clear spring sunshine; she wondered when and how she would see them again. She felt as if she were starting for the North Pole, to some unknown and far-away corner of the earth, and her heart sank, her courage almost failed her. The wind blew cold on her face and she shivered. The voyage in search of fortune had begun.

She went below and put on the black-and-white cloth dress of a gown which she had ordered with a view to the undoing of man on board ship. The long coat which went with it was made of scarlet, the color of bravery. She had a cup of tea and came up on deck. The stewardess was nice, and Adela had her cabin to herself; that was a joy. The passengers were all standing about the deck; they had not settled down. She went into the reading-room and wrote a letter to Gerty to say farewell. She wrote bravely. Why not? To succeed one must always believe in one's ultimate success. Gerty must never know how she yearned to be back again in her hopeless boarding-house nor how dreadful she felt. She gave the letter to the steward to send ashore by the pilot boat; then she stood by the rail watching the light-houses glide by. How fast, how unnecessarily fast, the Amsterdam was going! The sea was beginning to be ruffled, the bell rang, the engines stopped, the pilot clambered down the wriggling rope ladder. Adela waved a farewell to him with her hand—a farewell to the old life! Only one man saw it. He smiled and went below to find out where his seat was in the saloon. He intended to be near the lady with the blue eyes and the heavy black hair.

A dim rim was all that remained of the land. She settled herself down to dulness or to adventure, whichever the world might hold for her. At last the dressing-bugle sounded, so she went to array herself for dinner. She had resolved to be perfect as regards clothes, for who knew? Some man with money might see her, might like, might love— She shuddered. There was too much dynamite about her

scheme to make it a profitable subject for meditation; then and there she vowed that she would never think of her motives, that she would call business pleasure; after all, the name was everything; the label frequently sells the jam.

"Are you my neighbor?" A girl came out of the cabin opposite Adela's. "I am so lonely. I don't know a soul, do you?"

"No," said Adela; "I am lonely too."

"I am going to London," said the girl. "I am a journalist. You are travelling for pleasure, I'm sure—now, aren't you?" Adela nodded. "I knew that by your gown, you have on such a pretty one. I've got work on the staff of the *Gorgeous Vision*. Ever heard of it?"

"Not yet," said Adela.

"That is right," laughed the other, "but you will hear of it. You are right to say 'not yet.' I was getting tired of my life in America, so when they offered me a permanent post, just to write about plays, I took it, with the bad pay and all. I want to get to London, I want to get on! You are going to dress? So am I."

The saloon was full when Mrs. Percy sailed in. Her long, trailing black skirt was graceful, and her bodice of dull silk, covered with lace, fitted her as if she had had it stretched on her. The lace, transparent at the throat,—such a white throat,—was too becoming to her, thought some of the other women. They had prepared for seasickness,—their careless dressing proclaimed that fact,—and they looked as if they had slung on their blouses, which were not too fresh. Mrs. Percy was radiant. Why not? The play had begun, and she meant to play the heroine. If she felt shaky, she did not show it; if she trembled, no one knew it.

The steward found her seat for her; her name was in front of it on a card, but it had been turned round by a curious person, someone had wanted to know who was coming to that seat. Next to her, on the left, was a man. She did not pause to look at him; her face was too hot to bear the gaze of all the people at the table. She sat down. To her joy the girl whose cabin was opposite hers had the seat on her right.

"This is nice," said Adela as she looked at the menu. "I always feared that the seats on board ship were arranged by the alphabet, and that the passengers had no joy prepared for them."

"I did it," laughed the girl. "I went to the steward and told him I wanted to sit next you."

The man on Adela's left smiled a little, but no one saw it; he also had been to the steward and exchanged a couple of sovereigns for the privilege of having his seat next to Mrs. Percy's. He remarked tentatively, "I recommend the oysters."

Adela laughed and ordered oysters.

He was studying the menu and she studied him. He was dark; he

had a short, crisp mustache; he was well dressed in old, well-made clothes, and, above all things, he spoke nicely to the steward. Adela decided he was not uninteresting. Her neighbor, whose name was Miss Furnival, was already gayly conversing with the man on her right.

She turned to Adela and said: "My neighbor considers it very mean of the steward not to have put him between you and me. His name is Savage; he says he knows Mrs. Norton; she asked him to look out for you."

Mrs. Percy ordered roast beef and felt the voyage was not beginning badly.

"I hope I may consider myself introduced to you, Mrs. Percy," said Mr. Savage.

"I think you may," said Adela demurely. "A ship introduction is easily forgotten, if you want to forget it."

"And if I do not want to forget it?" asked Mr. Savage.

"Well, then, it is easily remembered."

"Is this your first voyage?" asked the man next Adela.

"Yes," she answered. "I hope it won't be my last. I am going to London."

"So am I," he answered. "You go to friends?"

"I hope to meet friends incidentally," said Adela. "I am going on business." How nice it sounded, and yet—and yet——

"My name is Crossley," he said. "I know yours is Percy, for I looked at your label."

"At my label?" she repeated. "Oh! I see, you mean my card. Yes, my name is Percy."

They went up on deck after dinner. The night was calm; the stars were out in a white sky that looked clear and cold to her eyes; the air was soft, and so Adela sat down in her deck chair and Mr. Crossley put his beside her. They talked for some time. He asked her if her husband was the Pardeberg Percy.

"Yes," she said, and something very like a grip seized her throat.

She felt some surprise that Mr. Savage had not come to speak to her. He had said that Mrs. Norton had told him to be civil. Had Mrs. Norton told him more? A cold, horrible chill of apprehension and fear, the fear that hath torment, crept into her heart. Had Gerty told him? But no, she would not have been so mean.

A steward brought her a letter. She was pleased. It was from Gerty.

"May I read it?" she said, turning to Mr. Crossley.

"By all means, if you can see."

He moved his chair. He was so strong, so hard, so brown, and his hands and nails were such a good shape. Adela gave a faint sigh. He was not the sort of man she had come to attract; he was too good to

be married by a woman who would accept him as she would a good situation.

"Why did you sigh?" he asked.

"I felt bored by life, by circumstances," said Adela candidly and bitterly.

"Every woman is an actress," said Mr. Crossley.

"Doesn't it ever occur to you that we get tired of it? To play forever that one loves domesticity is wearing." She stopped. Candor is like the X-rays, it tells too much of the inner working of the mind. Why should she be fool enough to tell him that she wanted to talk to the hero, she wanted to find the hero, she wanted him to—the indefinite hero—to love her. "Pretend you enjoy playing the parts you have to play," said wisdom in her mind.

Adela opened her letter.

"DEAREST ADELA: I met Mr. Savage in the train coming up, and he talked of going to England by the Amsterdam. I told him to look out for you if he did choose that ship. He is the rich Savage, the proprietor of something, I forget whether it is hair-wash or dog-biscuit. Anyhow, with your looks and your aspirations you ought to be able to work him, for he is a millionaire—in pounds, not in dollars. Return to me as Mrs. Reginald Francis Savage and I will forgive you everything. Be sure you don't tell him what you are up to. I hope you will write to me often, for you will have adventures. Yours always,

"GERTY."

Adela's heart felt lighter. Gerty had not betrayed her confidence! She felt stung with the shame of what Mr. Savage might have said and done had he known of her intentions. The relief of finding he knew nothing was almost too great.

"I am tired," she said.

Mr. Crossley accompanied her to the companion-way; he carried her rugs and said he hoped to see her again in the morning. She liked his clear-cut face, his air of self-confidence, but who was he? Was she no wiser than a foolish girl to lose her heart so easily? And Mr. Savage was a millionaire—in pounds.

"How are you to-day?" Adela had breakfasted in bed and then went on deck for a walk. Some of the passengers were ill; she felt quite gay. Mr. Savage stood by her. He looked worn and gray. The Amsterdam was snorting through the sea; she was beginning to plunge through the big, white horses, and the air smelt damp, there was no land smell in it. Adela loved the rocking-horse motion; Mr. Savage looked as if he hated it.

"I love this," she answered. Was it her imagination, or was his neck fat and bulgy?

Mr. Crossley was walking up and down. He stopped a moment to ask her how she felt and whether he could do anything for her, but he did not stay with her. She wished he had stayed, but she devoted herself to the fascinating of Mr. Savage. He was with her all day; he spent the next one with her too, but his words did not ring true, though he was attracted by her, she could see. She did not like his glances. She scolded herself, this was the fault of her too ardent imagination, yet he did not appeal to her, though he was the rich Savage.

He talked about meeting her in town; he planned dinners and the theatres with her and promised to see that she had a good time. It was all tinsel, and Adela felt gay one moment and dreary the next, for it seemed as if she were playing marbles, there was nothing but the tinkle of the little balls. He bored her, but he had money. This was not the way to take what fate gave her. She had a future to live through. Perhaps she would not be able to make her money last for a year, as she had planned it should last. "Any check when you are penniless," said Adela to herself with a poor attempt at gayety. Gerty would have been delighted had she seen the way Mr. Savage was beginning to make love to Mrs. Percy. Some men's lovemaking is a sticky thing, just like molasses-candy and—— "Keep your eye on the future," said wisdom. She forgot the fact that quick lovemaking makes dull marrying.

Then the ship began to take green seas on board. To Adela it was all glorious, all new life, but Mr. Savage retired to his cabin to repair the ravages of sea-sickness. He stayed there, to her great, though unmentioned, joy.

Mr. Crossley then attached himself to her. The deck steward made a point of saying, "The chairs are together, sir," and they had the ship pretty much to themselves. She could not find out much of his history. He had had a hard life; so much information did he vouchsafe to her. He was a real white man, but had he money? Had he any position? What had he? He took good care of her, he saw she had all she wanted. She was never cold, never lonely, never without rugs or anything that is required on board a ship on a cold Atlantic voyage.

To fall in love with a man probably as penniless as herself was not what she had come to do, and she resisted his power over her. She thought of him, and would not think while she wanted to think. She remembered what Gerty had said. She decided there was something in the sea-air that affected her brain—she never acknowledged the possession of a heart. Her present feelings could only be the result of five days' constant conversation with a man who was clever and interesting. She assured herself that her interest in him would vanish as everything else vanishes and become merely like the memory of a good partner at a ball.

Miss Furnival was very ill,—sea-sick and wretched,—and so Adela used to take the girl into her cabin for the afternoon. Miss Furnival shared hers with four females. It became the most natural thing in the world when she was lying on Adela's sofa for Mr. Crossley to come in at four o'clock when the stewardess brought them tea and to sit and talk to them both. Why not? No one could object. Mrs. Percy was quite enough chaperone for Miss Furnival, and Miss Furnival's presence prevented anyone saying unkind things about Mrs. Percy.

Adela ceased to analyze and to argue with herself. She gave herself up to the pleasure of the present. Who ever heard of a woman having her heart lacerated in eight or nine days? They expected to land on the ninth day.

Mr. Savage recovered after the eighth day, and then there was a little comedy. Mr. Crossley stuck to his post; Mr. Savage tried to usurp it; Adela told herself that she was neutral—she played the game for Crossley. As it happened, this was the best thing she could have done for her much-vaunted future, the future for which she had crossed the ocean to make arrangements. Mr. Savage became earnest, Mrs. Percy became frightened.

It was the last evening. She had looked pale—too pale—at dinner. Mr. Crossley ordered champagne and insisted on Mrs. Percy and Miss Furnival sharing his wine.

He had been ranching out in British Columbia. Mrs. Percy felt sure he was poor. Poor! She knew the ghastly ring of that word, and she hated to drink his wine, while she could not refuse it.

"Why are you coming back to England?" she asked boldly as she strolled up and down the deck with him.

"I am coming to seek my fortune," he said slowly. "I have an idea that it is waiting for me there."

"Only an idea?" said Adela.

"Well, yes, only an idea."

"Never follow, never stake, anything on an idea," she said earnestly. "I have done that and I have lost all."

She felt a little hysterical. It was pain to her to leave the ship. She loathed saying good-by to the cabin where she had been so happy—no, she would not call it happy, but where she had been at rest.

"I wonder," said he, "when and where we shall meet again?"

"Nowhere and never," she answered flippantly. "Perhaps you will come and see me at the Metropole."

"Perhaps I will," he answered. "I have no such words as 'nowhere' and 'never' concerning you in my vocabulary."

"Do you live in London? I have never been there. I am longing to see all the streets and places I have read about."

"I live nowhere just now," said Harold Crossley. "I shall have to be up in town a lot—looking after the idea, you know. This is our last walk together."

"Yes," said Adela, and added to herself, "I can hear the carpenter making my coffin. I did not spend all my gold to marry a man with a ranch which does not pay (he had confessed that), nor is running after an idea a better thing to do."

The breeze from the land was cold; the stars, the paving-stones of heaven, were gold and green and red in the clear north light.

"There is my star," said Mrs. Percy. She pointed to the bright one hanging in the west. "I—lived when it rose, when they discovered it; I hope before it sets I shall live again."

"You will if——"

"Here you are," said a cheerful voice. Mr. Savage, recovered and self-satisfied, stood before them. "Miss Furnival and I have been looking for you. I want to talk to Mrs. Percy. I have not seen you for days and I am starved for a sight of your face. Mr. Crossley, will you look after Miss Furnival?" In a minute the world was altered, the starlight was dimmer, and Mr. Savage and Mrs. Percy strolled along behind Mr. Crossley and Miss Furnival.

"Such a nice girl," said Mr. Savage with an admiring glance at Miss Furnival's back, "but crude, too fond of her profession and of moneymaking."

"So would you be," said Adela, "if you ever had to do without money. I think a profession is a good thing for a woman."

"Marriage is the best profession for a woman," he said didactically.

"Where did you hear that?" demanded Adela. "It is my maxim; I invented it."

"Did you?" he asked carelessly. "Mrs. Norton said it to me and I agreed with her. I thought it clever at the time. I am glad you said it. Every woman ought to marry: it rounds her off; it finishes her. I would never be bothered talking to a girl when I could talk to a married woman."

"Why not?" asked Adela.

"Don't you know?" He laughed softly. She did not like that laugh. "I suppose it is because a married woman is more amusing, more up in the ways of the world, more lenient. She understands more and isn't as hard as a girl."

"Where have they gone?" asked Adela, for the others had disappeared. Her exclamation was almost a cry.

"Gone! let them go. I want you to myself, to tell you that I love you."

"You don't, you——" She did not believe him.

"Yes, I do, I love you." They were standing on the end of the

promenade deck. He put his arm round her and tried to hold her face up to his.

"Don't!" she said,— "don't!" Memories strangled her, she gasped. Was it the feeling the wrong man had his arm round her? Her brain insistently asked her this question.

"You little witch! A girl would have let me, a girl would not have known that the moment had not come. I will see you in London, and you won't keep me waiting very long, will you? I love you."

Mrs. Percy went dolorously down to bed. In spite of her excellent prospects, she did not sleep.

The stewardess called her at five; the pilot was on board, they were going into Liverpool.

Adela went up to town with Miss Furnival; Mr. Savage fumed and followed by a later train. The ladies went third class; Miss Furnival had to do that, and Mrs. Percy would not leave her. Mr. Crossley had just time to ask Adela for her town address before he left the ship. He was staying in Liverpool. Mr. Savage invited Mrs. Percy to dine with him at the Carlton the next evening. She accepted his invitation. She hated herself; she could not forget Mr. Crossley, and she could have screamed with disgust at her own actions and her own motives. She took Miss Furnival with her to the Metropole for one night.

III.

ADELA wrote to Mrs. van Ingen from Queenstown, she hoped so much from Gerty's sister. Surely she would introduce her to the section of English life that Adela so yearned to know. No letter awaited her at the Metropole. She felt as if someone had struck her, though she assured herself there was not time for a letter to have come.

She went shopping and ordered two evening dresses and one fluffy day gown. She paid for them; this investment of the capital looked pretty. She wondered whether Harold Crossley would ever come to see her.

Nancy Furnival, full of indomitable energy, had found a flat for herself. It was in Ladies' Residential Chambers and consisted of a bed sitting-room with a tiny, wee pantry containing a gas stove. Nancy had a latch-key and her own front door, which gave her immense pleasure. Adela envied her. Things were costing her more than she had allowed for, but she hoped, with the invincible hope of the gambler, that all would come right. Was she not engaged to Mr. Savage?—to one of the richest men in England? Was she, though? Had he really meant that sudden and hateful avowal of affection for her? He came often to see her. One night she had dined with him at the Carlton and they went to the theatre. When the play was over he drove back with her to the Metropole.

"I will come in just for one cigarette and a little talk," he said. "I never really see you. I have not enjoyed to-night, it was too tantalizing. I want you to arrange for our little wedding tour together. You know that I love you. What is the number of your sitting-room? You can take me straight up there, can't you?"

"It is too late now." She was quite indifferent whether she offended him or not. "I have no sitting-room!"

"No sitting-room! Good Heaven! why did you come to a hotel where they can't give you a sitting-room? Leave to-morrow if they don't give you one."

"Is it necessary?"

"Of course it is. I won't come to see you and sit in the hotel drawing-room. I love you. I am not going to talk pretty selected platitudes in a public room for all the hotel haunTERS to hear. I am too well known for that."

"You can't come in to-night," said Adela decidedly.

"You little witch!" he laughed, "you know the way to enthrall me. Most women are cherries and overripe."

"I am not even ripe," said she coldly.

"I know that. Sometimes I wish you were, and yet that is why I admire you so much. If you had been riper, I would have tired of you long ago. The way you led Crossley on, on board ship, was positively inimitable—inimitable!" he said with admiration. "It was splendid!"

"Are you ever jealous? Could you ever be jealous?"

"Try me and see if you forget it. Don't you play tricks when I am not here, for if you do——"

"What will you do?"

"I don't talk," he answered.

"Good-night," said Adela. How foolish it was of her not to feel gay! Life was so dull. The circumventing of the embraces of Mr. Savage, fencing with him, dressing for him, fearing lest she might lose him and half hoping that she would, had brought her nerves to a state of tension. No band played a tune for her march along Life's road. She was paying the piper but fate was calling the tune!

She asked at the office for letters. There were none. It was dreary being in a strange land alone. Mrs. van Ingen had not written. Adela wrote to her again. Then she went to bed. The days passed. Mr. Savage still squirmed because she had no private sitting-room, but he had to sit in the hall or in the drawing-room. Adela dreaded being alone with Frank Savage. She disliked him, and he was going to be her husband. She could not bear to think of it, yet that was her reason for crossing the ocean; she had announced it, she had come to seek her fortune, to marry money, and she had the money and the man in her grasp. Her mistake was in having thought of a husband as merely

an incident in her career, a sort of Universal Provider; she saw that he would be a big and irremediable fact.

Her money was dwindling. Her hotel bill, try as she did to keep it small, was generally much more than she had allowed for. She forgot all the worries sometimes, for she lived a life of excitement, of intervals of forgetfulness and then of depression, worry, and despair.

"A gentleman in the drawing-room to see you, Ma'am," said a little boy, and she strolled leisurely downstairs. But her heart did not beat leisurely when she saw her visitor was Mr. Crossley. She hoped he had not seen her give a little, quick gasp.

"I am only up for three days," he said. "I have the day before me if you will share it with me. Can you come for a drive? We can get lunch somewhere."

"I would love it," answered she. For that day she would take out her heart and wear it on her chain. They drove down to Richmond and lunched at the Star and Garter. Then they went into the Park and sat under a big oak-tree. He had so much to tell her; he was like a boy, so gay.

"Are you a heartless woman?" he demanded.

"Yes," she answered. She was determined to live up to the role she had planned for herself, to sign her own death-warrant. "I am heartless, I am mercenary."

"How can you be mercenary? I mean, how can you expect gold in exchange for a heart when you say you have no heart?"

"I do not ask for gold," said she quietly.

"I wonder why you never talk of yourself?"

"Because I despise myself."

"You shouldn't do that. Why need you?"

She shook her head. Oh, to be back at home in that little village going out to sit alone in the woods! It was dull, stagnant—still, it had been peaceful. Now she was out in Life's river and she felt the current was too strong for her.

"I have to do what seems best and most expedient," she said. "I loathe talking about myself; let me be happy to-day."

"Ah, then you are happy with me!" he said triumphantly.

"Yes," she answered with slow reluctance.

"Do you like your hotel?"

"Not much." This was a safe subject.

"Why not go into lodgings? It does not seem nice for you, so pretty and attractive, to be alone at the Metropole."

"My peerless bloom won't tarnish," she answered flippantly. "I don't intend to stay long at the Metropole."

"This is a lovely day," he said. "I am perfectly happy with you. On board ship I thought you were charming, just a charming incident."

("More incidents," thought she, and she smiled.) "I meant to talk to you as I would to any pretty woman. I began with that idea, or, rather, without any idea in my mind; afterwards I——"

"You?" she longed to hear him say what he intended.

"I got hurt. Then I landed and I worked; I was alone, and I could feel the sea-air on my face and hear the throb of the engines and see the fog sweeping across the deck, till even the head-light was dim; you and I were alone there together, and I"—he laughed—"I longed to see you again; I had to come for you to-day. I want you always with me."

Her spirit writhed as she realized what she would have to throw away.

"I call that mental aberration," she said slowly, while the blood leaped and throbbed with joy all over her. He loved her. She could have died gladly, then she grew chilly; the hurricane had come. Gerty had been right, and her heart was not made of granite.

"I am going to marry Mr. Savage," said Adela, and it seemed to her that her voice sounded as if it were coming through a fog; she could not see him for the mist in her eyes.

"Be warned in time; he will never marry anyone, he says so; he——"

"It is settled."

"Perhaps we had better be moving on." He spoke after a long pause, during which Adela saw herself, her motives, and her future—"Yes, God help me," she murmured, "the future"—in the bright light of horror and disgust.

"I suppose I had better congratulate you. You would like some tea before we start?"

"Tea!—tea would strangle me. I mean, thank you, I am not thirsty."

He talked occasionally, and sometimes she answered him and often she did not speak at all. The future bride of one of the richest commoners in England was not at all exhilarated.

"You will be in town again; come and see me," she said as he helped her out of the victoria. She had noticed the horses and the servants; they were both as perfect as it is possible to have. She clutched his hand as if she were afraid of his leaving her, as though she wanted to keep him.

"I won't lose sight of you, I hope," said Mr. Crossley. "There is Savage; I'll be off."

Mr. Savage stood on the hotel steps; his face was red and he looked cross.

"You've been out all day with Crossley," he said insolently.

"Yes, I have," she answered.

"Well, I don't like it. I suppose you let him kiss you."

"How dare you say that?"

"I don't like my goods shopworn."

"Nor do I," she answered. "You look very shopworn now."

He gave a half-mollified laugh.

"Look here," he said. "I've been to the manager while you were out; I've told him to give you a sitting-room at once. I am not going to play about hotel corridors waiting for any woman."

"It will cost a lot."

"Rot!" he answered. "I'll pay for it, if you like. I came to ask you to come to the opera to-night, I have a box." He did not add that Lady Mortlock had always adorned it nor that she had quarrelled with him, having heard rumors of his infatuation for an unknown beauty with black hair and blue eyes.

"I can't go."

"Why not? It is a big night, all the royalties will be there, and——"

"I would not go if they all had asked to meet me. I am going to bed; I shall dine in my room," and she went up in the lift, shut and locked her bedroom door, and fell to weeping.

It was of no use to call herself a fool, to hate herself, to loathe life, and to more than hate Frank Savage. It was her own fault, not his. She felt as if her skin had been peeled off and as if someone were hitting her on the raw flesh. She was applying the whip and scourging herself. She wriggled with the torture of the thoughts in her brain, and the reiteration of them, which she could not stop, was driving her frantic. She drank some tea, she could not eat anything. The boy brought her up some letters,—actually letters,—the first she had received for a month. One was from Miss Furnival, who wanted her to dine at the Hen Run—only women were allowed to dwell there, hence Nancy's name for it. She saw Mr. Crossley's writing.

"I think I had better not see you again, I can't bear it. I don't want to think of you belonging to Savage, so good-by, and I hope I may never meet you again. I love you better than my life; I'd give all I possess to marry you. If you ever are in trouble, if you should ever need a man or a man's strong arm, let me know. The banker's address I gave you will always find me, and if you don't marry Savage, for Heaven's sake send me a telegram. I don't care if you don't love me; if you were free I would do all I could to make you, and I believe I'd succeed. Yours always,

"H. M. C."

Harold Melton Crossley. Those were his names; she had seen them in his prayer-book on the Sunday they had church on board the Am-

sterdam. Here was another shattered illusion: he had said good-by to her. Adela buried her face in her pillow and sobbed. The tears were so hot they pained her eyes, and weeping did not make her feel better.

There was another letter which she had not noticed. She read it idly. It was from Mrs. van Ingen, asking her to an "at home" the next day.

"Forgive the short invitation," wrote Clara van Ingen, "I only just got your note. I have been away, and it has been following me about." This recognition of her existence came too late to bring any feeling of elation to Adela's crushed spirit. She could not sleep, and she tossed and thought and planned all night. Mr. Savage sent her some flowers in the morning and a diamond ring. It was a blaze of light, but it brought none to her.

At four o'clock that afternoon Adela, arrayed in a gown of soft white muslin, a simple frock trimmed with real lace and chiffon, stood in her sitting-room with Mr. Savage. He had tried to kiss her, but she had only laughed at him and said:

"Don't crush my gown. It is new, and I don't want it to look shopworn."

"You will never forgive me for that."

"I think I never will." Her voice sounded as if it had been on ice for a week. "That will rather amuse you, won't it?"

"It will. No woman ever kept me hanging about her for six weeks, as you have done, without any reward."

"You forget the occasional kiss, and also that I cheer you with my priceless society."

"In July," he remarked, "we'll go to—where would you like to go? On the yacht? You are a good sailor, and we'd put into port every night."

"Not in July," she answered; "there are so many anniversaries in July that I must keep. How would September suit you?"

"Not at all. You talk as if——"

"I must be off now. Come and put me into my coupé. You dine with me to-night?"

"Yes, up here."

"No, down below. You can smoke in this room afterwards."

"You look better than I have ever seen you look," he said with slow appreciation.

"It must be this simple frock," she answered. She knew that its simplicity was the most expensive art.

"I wonder how Mrs. Van came to ask you to her show? They talk a lot about you and me."

"Do they?" she asked indifferently. "So you know Mrs. van Ingen?"

"I have been introduced to her scores of times, but she always cuts me."

"I have known her nearly all my life," said Adela.

She made her entrance into the van Ingen box (for the house was only a square box) with a rustle and an air of bravery which was counterfeit. Mrs. van Ingen, who stood at the top of a proud eminence, the narrow staircase, was cool, not to say frigid, but Adela, who had gone to the function expecting nothing, was not disappointed when she discovered she would get nothing in the way of friendship from Clara van Ingen. Not one kind word nor look was vouchsafed her, no inquiries were made for Gerty; Adela was clearly an unwelcome guest.

"To hastily resuscitate a friendship is like trying to warm an omelette," said Adela boldly. "I am sure you resent my claiming any acquaintance with you." Mrs. van Ingen stared at her bold visitor. "I would not have bothered you if you had not besought me to do so when you were in Newcastle."

"Do go and have some tea." Mrs. van Ingen corralled a man. He looked at the convoy she desired him to escort to the tea-room and clearly approved of Mrs. Percy's appearance.

"I am always delighted to see my friends," said Mrs. van Ingen. "I am going away soon, and after I return I hope to see more of you——"

"Clara van Ingen," said Adela, "don't talk rubbish; you don't want me and I shall not bother you again. After Mr. Burgess has given me some tea I am going home. You need not make excuses; you know that you don't want to be bothered with me now."

Mr. Burgess got Adela a cup of cold and bitter tea. He talked as well as he could while his coat was nearly torn off him by a ramping, thirsty crowd. They were jammed in the doorway, and Mrs. Percy gave a sigh as she remembered those simple little frills on her gown.

A thirsty friend waved to Mr. Burgess.

"I won't be long," he said, and elbowed his way through the mob.

"That is the woman!" said a man behind Adela. "She is a beauty. She is always with Savage." Adela gasped. Could he mean her? Were they talking about her? If only she could get away, but she seemed to be held in a vice.

"He is infatuated," said the woman with him, laughing. "He won't marry her; he says Savages never do marry—permanently."

Adela squirmed as she felt their eyes on her face.

"She can't mind that slight omission," he said. "Mrs. van Ingen tells me she is only an adventuress; she actually came over here to find a husband. Savage was the wrong card to hold."

"It was rather brilliant of her," said the woman, with a half

grudging admiration in her voice. Then she added censoriously, "I wonder Clara van Ingen has her here. It is too much to expect us to mix with all the women Mr. Savage adores. Everyone knows he never could tolerate anyone decent. Now, Lady Mortlock is the only one I ever called on, and she——"

Adela was not used to hearing such a delineation of her own character. No doubt they were accustomed to thinking of her as they described her. She gave them a push. Not in vain had she used her arms paddling her canoe and fishing; they had to give her room to get away. She left most of her flounces on the floor under the man's foot, but she did not care. "Torturing is in fashion again," she said to herself as she went up to Clara.

"Good-by, Clara," said Adela. She stood in front of her, tall and lithe, and her eyes were blazing with anger. "I think you might have told me what Gerty had written to you. I have just heard your guests talking about me; they said you had supplied the information."

Mrs. van Ingen winced. She was never brave at close quarters; she always told a lie rather than hurt anyone's feelings. "I do not understand you."

"They said you were the agency which had supplied the news, that I am an adventuress in search of—oh," cried Adela impatiently, "let it all go. I must be off, but I just wanted to tell you that I am engaged to be married."

"Yes?" Clara was politely indifferent.

"To Mr. Savage," finished Adela.

"You clever woman," gushed Mrs. van Ingen, "how on earth did you do it? Ever so many girls and mothers have tried. How did you——"

"Good-by," interrupted Adela. This might be glory, but she felt like death!

IV.

THE dressing of Adela took a long time that evening, and if before she began the decorating of her person (though she did not paint) she drank a strong brandy and soda, no one knew it except the waiter who brought it up to her.

The next day would see the signing of her death-warrant. It would appear in the paper under the heading of "Fashionable Intelligence," but, nevertheless, it would be her death-warrant and would run as follows:

"A marriage has been arranged and will shortly take place between Mrs. Percy, widow of the late Captain Bertram Percy, Canadian Regiment, and Mr. Frank Savage, of Castletown Castle, Inverness Lodge, Banffshire, and 400 Park Lane."

Adela looked unapproachably brilliant when her guest arrived. She had ordered the champagne he liked; it cost a guinea a bottle, but she did not care. As the future wife of a millionaire with two country places and a house in Park Lane she need not consider the price of the wine she drank.

She felt numbed, as if someone had given her a dose of morphia. The horror of what they said about her and the pain—for Gerty had played the traitor and told Mrs. van Ingen—had turned Adela's brain into wool; her head felt stuffed. Gerty had told Clara the truth; that was what stung.

"What sort of a time did you have?" asked Savage. He did not talk much until after the entrée, which he said was good; all the rest of the dinner he called beastly.

"The answering of that question requires consideration," said she. "I nearly ruined my new gown, and I finished its career by trampling it to bits when I got home, I was so angry."

He grinned. "They were horrid?"

"Truthful would be a better name for them; truth is generally horrid."

"Did Mrs. Van mention me?"

"No. I heard one or two other people mention you. Have you finished? I told them to send the coffee up to the sitting-room."

"This is better than sitting with the gallery," he said as he lighted a cigar, and the waiter, who had brought the coffee and poured out the liqueurs, shut the door as he went out. "Come and sit beside me? You won't?" He got up and went over to her. He put his arms round her as she was standing by the mantelpiece.

"Don't kiss me," she said. "You sha'n't kiss me," and she slipped down out of his arms on to the floor. That was a trick taught her by Gerty, for a man wants to hold a woman close to him; he does not think of holding her up. "I have something to say," she said. "To-day or yesterday, I forget which it was, I said I would not marry you in July. I want to marry you next week. You can put the announcement in the papers."

"We'll go to Dover first; the papers can wait. I don't put my doings in the papers. There would be some pretty reading if I did," and he laughed.

"This excursion of yours," said Adela with a pale face and strained, staring eyes, "must go into every paper. I will have it where everyone—all those women—can see it; I would, if I could, hire sandwich men to walk up and down Bond Street with notices in large letters."

"What rot!" he said as he was drinking his liqueur. "Did you ever try brandy and benedictine mixed? Or was it benedictine? It

was brandy to start with, and I forget what they put with it; I had it to-day at the lunch Molyneux gave. What a head I have! I cannot remember what it was he gave me mixed."

"You must write out a notice and send it to the papers to-night," said Adela. She had not heard one word of what he had been saying, and she had not swerved from her own track. "Don't you understand that I won't be branded? Don't you know that they say I am—— I won't have such things said of me, so write it out, or I will. Get a license and I will marry you next week."

"You can get the license," he answered.

"Be sensible for once," besought Adela. "I am so tired to-night."

"I am sensible; I am sensible of my luck, and——"

"Are you? You don't know what they were saying about me to-day."

"Don't I? I can jolly well guess. They say a good many things about my women friends. But you will soon get used to it. It is only the beginning that takes you so hard! Wait until you see——"

"What do you mean?" interrupted Adela coldly. "Does it amuse you to think of what they said about your future wife?"

"Haven't met her yet. What do I care for the way they talk about an unknown person? My future wife must be about two now. I am not going to marry until I am fifty; then I will have a girl of twenty. What are you bothering about? Pack your trunks and let us be up and off. I am tired of London."

"I do not understand one word you say," she answered wearily. "You say you want me to come to Dover first, and you laugh about your future wife. Are you going to poison me when you are fifty?" She spoke with an air of assumed frivolity which sounded sadder than tears.

"What rubbish you talk! I never cared anything for anyone except for you. You look awfully well to-night, you entrancing cat! I have no time to think of anyone but you."

"Is it all a dream? Tell me quickly, for I don't know what you mean—do you love me?" She was bewildered.

"Yes, of course I do; I love you better and I want you more than I have ever loved or wanted any woman."

"I told Mrs. van Ingen that I was going to marry you."

"You told her what?" shouted he. He sat up and stared at her. She saw how weak his shoulders were—how hard his mouth.

"Don't be so noisy. I told her—what I said: that I am engaged to you. It is true, isn't it?" She laughed a little. If only it were not so hideously true!

"True? I am not going to marry any woman. No, it is not true. I am much too wary a bird. What an idiot you were to give the show away—to say anything about me at all! Well," he spoke with calm

philosophy, "it won't hurt me. I can't be painted any blacker, and——"

"Good God!" cried Adela, marching across the room until she stood by him, "tell me straight what you do mean."

"I mean to take you abroad for a little honeymoon tour. The honey of the moon does not last. What else did you expect?" He carefully put some ash from his cigar into a tray by him. "Mrs. Norton"—Adela gave a moan and hid her face in the cushions—"told me why you were coming over; for adventure, she said—to get hold of a man with money. 'She's sporting,' I said when I heard that; 'she shall have adventure if I can tolerate her,' and here we are! You shall have what you want, and I am infatuated about you. You are coming with me to Dover on Saturday, and then we can go anywhere you like until we are bored, then good-by and no——"

Adela had turned away while he was speaking. She was determined to hear all he had to say. She had hidden her face in her hands; she stooped over the table. Once or twice her shoulders had quivered, otherwise she had given no sign of hearing him.

"Go," she said, standing erect. "Go at once. Listen to me. I believe that I could not put any fear of God nor of man into you; I am certain you will think that I am lying, but, as sure as I know that I shall die, I never knew, until you so graphically informed me, that you did not want to marry me. I would never have tolerated you for five minutes if I had thought that! I was criminal, for I would have married you for your money,—just for your money, God help me,—because I am poor. Now I am free and you can go! I am free!"

"You must have known what——"

"How could I have known anything? I never met anyone at all like you before."

"You were simple, genuine, and I thought you an actress."

"You thought I was clever, deep; well, I am not. I can't bear any more. Can't you see that I loathe you? I despise myself. I see what they meant, the shame of it. Did you tell Mr. Crossley?"

"Did I tell whom?"

"Did you tell Mr. Crossley that I was an adventuress? Did you tell him all Gerty told you?—that I was trying to sell myself for money? What did you tell him?" She swept across the room and faced him. She was no longer bowed with shame and horror. She spoke with the insistence of the woman who would know. "Answer me."

"I may have hinted my suspicions to him."

"Your suspicions," she repeated.

He could not tell whether she spoke angrily or sorrowfully. She handed him his ring. He stood irresolutely by the door.

"Go, please," said Adela quietly.

"I'll never come back again. You have spent all your money; you have no one to help you. You are throwing away your last card, remember."

"You won't believe me when I tell you I don't care. I see what a fool I have been. The career of the adventures is over—go!"

And he went.

She looked round the room. Was it really true? Had he said all those awful things? She buried her face, for the hot shame on it hurt her. He was gone, gone forever, and but for the detestable way of getting rid of him she could have rejoiced honestly. The next day she would leave the Metropole; she would get cheap lodgings and write stories; she would support herself; she must wash out the shame, the ignominy, the beastliness she felt in her soul. To think that he— In her heart she knew it was her own fault, but that knowledge hurt her most.

Nancy Furnival knew that Mrs. Percy was engaged to Mr. Savage. She detested him. She had not informed Adela of that fact. Nancy was not surprised to hear that the hastily arranged marriage was broken off.

"I am leaving the Metropole and going into lodgings," said Mrs. Percy. "I've engaged rooms in Cambridge Street—near you, Nancy."

"That is the best news I have heard since I came to London," said Miss Furnival.

Adela looked ill, wretched. "I am going to write," she said. "Will you criticise my work?"

"Of course," said the girl kindly. "You look tired out. Do go to bed and have a good rest."

"Rest! I could not rest. I feel goaded; I feel— Oh, my heart is not broken; don't look at me as if you thought me the victim of a hopeless love affair. I must try and get to bed early. As you are the only person I know in London, I think I can manage my evening engagements so that I get to bed early; my distractions won't be many."

Adela did not write to Mr. Crossley. She felt too wretched and too much ashamed to do that. Her lodgings were as cheap as she could find. With great care her money might last until October. She began to write. Driven by the fear of destitution, the ideas would not come to her. When the story was done she took it to Nancy, who decided it would not do for the *Vision*. Then Adela began that most awful of employments, the storming of magazine offices and the interviewing of editors.

The only balm her wounded spirit received in those days was the sight of an insertion in the *Morning Post*:

"The marriage arranged between Mrs. Percy, widow of Captain Bertram Percy, Canadian Regiment, and Mr. Frank Savage, of Castletown Castle, Inverness Lodge, and 400 Park Lane, will not take place."

He had made the only amends possible to her and she was grateful to him, but, as it happened, Nancy had paid for the insertion!

The outside world did not matter much to Adela in those days; it was all dark and lowering. She got no letters except the printed ones, "the Editor regrets," etc., etc.; they were not cheering to receive.

At last her long story was accepted by the *Family Sentinel*. It paid her twenty-five pounds for it, and she took heart, sent for Nancy, and they dined at a funny little French restaurant for one and sixpence; then they, to finish a delirious evening, went to the Haymarket, for which Nancy had stalls.

Adela was growing tired of her dreary surroundings. She had no spare money to decorate her rooms, nor could she buy clean cretonne for the dingy sofa and the chairs. She could afford to eat a little more, but she could not take a holiday; she had to remain in hot, airless London all through August, yet in a way she felt she was working out her salvation; she was paying her score—paying for the awful thing she had done, for that which she had meant to do, to marry Savage simply for the settlements. She vowed to pay bravely. Courage was the virtue she admired most; she would not cry out and be a coward.

Nancy, the proud possessor of a permanent income (she had a post on the *Weekly Argus*; she wrote the fashion column, assisted by Adela, who had an eye for clothes, while Nancy had none), had departed in the early days of hot, sultry August to the seaside. Vainly did she beseech Adela to join her. Mrs. Percy was working; work was the best drug she had found; it left no evil effects. She had no eye for anything except copy, and looked just like a plaintive baby, with her big blue eyes, which had a pathetic air. All through that hot month she slaved until she got—most unromantic of diseases—the chicken-pox.

To an ordinary woman in ordinary circumstances it would have been a bore; to Adela it was an appalling tragedy.

Her landlady was very cross, but bore the blow by raising her tenant's rent and congratulating herself that it was August and the house empty of other lodgers. The doctor's bill, the extras—fruit, milk purveyed by the landlady, not to mention the innumerable bottles of medicine purchased at the chemist's—had reduced Adela's small store of money in a most alarming way. She was very weak; she felt shockingly ill, and she counted her pennies and her shillings whenever she gave herself time to think. Her work dragged and failed. It was

poor and weak. Had she been left to herself she would not have had a doctor, nor any of the hundred and one things which had cost so much. The bill for beef-tea meat read as if she had used a whole ox.

Her short stories came back to the fold. There was no one to tell her that no editor was in town to read the gems sent to him by struggling aspirants. Everyone who could had left London. She felt as if the Day of Judgment were dawning, and as if she were alone, cold, and done for. Desperation and the success of one story goaded her to get up and work. The work was feeble. The *Family Sentinel* refused the next story she sent it. It was not on the same interesting lines to please its readers; there was not enough love in it; it felt sure Mrs. Percy could ultimately please them, which sentiment, though satisfactory, did not pay her bills.

September brought Nancy back to town. She was full of new ideas, new schemes for the autumn campaign. She attributed Adela's sepulchral gloom to her illness. If she had known, it was caused by meals of tea and bread in the cheapest shop Adela could find, varied by visits to the pawn-shop, which were neither cheering nor conducive to a supply of endless gayety. Nancy was too busy to bother, Adela was too desperate to want anyone near her. She merely yearned to crawl out and die alone. The memory of Mr. Crossley, the man she loved, was always with her, and remorse, that dogging wolf, came and stayed by her. In trying to grasp the rich man she had seized the blackguard. The aching longing to hear Harold Crossley's voice, to touch his hand, never left her. She grew half frantic in the evening listening, listening, for a step that never came, that never could come. The dull echo of each footfall in the street hurt her like a blow; she winced as if she had been struck; but no one came.

Mrs. Percy never went to the Metropole for letters, she had struck straight off that trail; she never meant to go back to it again; but there were many letters waiting for her. Gerty had written; Mrs. van Ingen had called there, but did not see the woman who could refuse Mr. Savage. She believed the notice in the *Morning Post*, so did Mr. Crossley; he wrote several times and at last went to the Metropole; no one knew where Mrs. Percy had gone. Adela might be in her grave for all they knew. In faraway Canada Mrs. Norton had qualms of conscience, for Clara van Ingen had spared no detail when giving her opinion of Mrs. Percy, and Gerty gathered that it was what she had said, not what Adela had done, which had produced such a torrent of wrath. Gerty felt ashamed of herself; she knew she had been a brute; she knew there was a tragic mystery surrounding Adela's disappearance, but she made no endeavor to find out her dwelling-place nor her method of earning a living. In course of time the Metropole sent Mrs. Percy's letters to the Dead Letter Office. Gerty received hers and Mr. Crossley received his.

By the end of October Adela had pawned everything she possessed worth anything, and when she paid her landlady she had exactly five shillings in the world. She gave up her rooms. Her writing had not produced what she had anticipated. She had arranged her future hopefully, calculating that if she could write one story in a month and get twenty-five pounds for it she could easily do that every month. The arithmetic was correct, but her stories did not sell. She left her one trunk at Waterloo Station, and with five shillings in her pocket she journeyed to take counsel with Nancy Furnival. She felt a hopeless, hideous failure; her heart and her spirit were weary; life was pain—a great, lonely stretch of pain.

V.

TO REALIZE the terror of London to a woman who is alone and penniless is difficult for those who have never had to face the world on five shillings, with no hope.

Mrs. Percy sat in an armchair in Nancy's flat. When she had arrived Nancy was still out, but the porter, who knew her well, let her in with his key. Mrs. Percy was wet and cold; it was a chilly October day, and the rain, driven by a cutting east wind, was sweeping down the empty streets, whirled by the gale.

Mrs. Percy had not seen much of Nancy. They were both busy. Adela had been careful not to ask Nancy to lunch or to tea, for half the time she did not have either meal—a bun and a glass of milk was all she allowed herself. Nancy had no time to go and see her friend, and she felt certain that Adela had a few friends with whom she amused herself. Nancy had heard of the existence of Mrs. van Ingen, but not of her disappearance from the scene. "Gay and busy do not mix," said Miss Furnival learnedly, and she let Mrs. Percy alone.

Adela had been trying to coin gold out of brains and desperation. They are not of much use in a mint. Nancy had no idea that she was destitute; she thought that the woman whom she admired so much had an assured income, which, even if it were small, would keep the wolf of despair from her door. Besides, Nancy was not curious.

At last she walked in.

"I'm here, Nancy," said Mrs. Percy. "Can you give me your sofa to sleep on to-night? I'm adrift. To-morrow I shall go and look for a situation of some sort. What would I do for?"

"I have just been to see you. Why have you left your rooms? I've some news for you. Greaterex says he might use some stuff of yours. Send him a bundle in the morning, will you?"

"I am a failure."

"Rubbish! you only want a cup of tea."

"It is true, I am ruined. I have spent every penny I possess in this world. They said I was an adventuress. Well, it is true."

"The career of an adventuress would be an uncomfortable one to take up," said Nancy. "It wants so much courage and capital. You know you don't mean it."

"Yes, I do—I do." Then Adela told the whole story, told Nancy everything that had happened since she left Canada.

"I'll make some tea," said Nancy. "It will clear our brains. You must get some work at once. What are you fit for?"

"I don't know," said Adela. "I'll answer advertisements."

"I know what you will do now," said Nancy, "and that is, go to bed. You are worn out. Drink your tea, put on my dressing-gown, and get into my bed."

"I won't." Adela spoke with decision. "I'll sleep on your sofa, but if you offer me your bed, if you dare to offer it, I'll go—I'll go at once."

Nancy laughed. "Very well, you can have the sofa, but it is much more comfortable than my bed."

Soon Adela was actually resting. She was at peace, she was warm and comfortable. The howling wind outside yelled despair, poverty, and destitution; for the first time in six months she did not care.

The old woman who came to get Nancy's breakfast and do her room, for the munificent sum of five pence an hour, was dispatched to buy newspapers. Adela turned her attention to studying their columns and made plans for seeking a situation. First she resolved to go to West Kensington; someone there was advertising for a housekeeper.

"A LADYLIKE PERSON wanted at once as housekeeper.
Good wages to suitable applicant. Apply 24 Tregar
Road, West Kensington."

Nancy had found what she thought would be a far better place; a tea-shop in Holborn was advertising for lady agents to sell its teas.

"It wouldn't be half bad," said Nancy as she ate her toast and read advertisements. "You get a directory and you find out the names of all the best people in the neighborhood. Then you ring the bell with the assurance of an acquaintance, you ask for the lady of the house, see her, talk tea; she probably buys a pound; you get paid for it, give her a receipt, and that is how it is done. I really believe it pays. They give a good percentage. You could manage it all right."

"If they thought I suited them," said Adela wistfully. "It is all so easy in theory."

"There is always that disturbing if; it is a wicked word." Nancy seized her fountain pen and rushed out.

Adela started with a long list. The West Kensington residence

was hard to find. It did not look as if a housekeeper could be required for such a small establishment. There was no need to ring the bell; the door was open, the hall was crowded; women were standing on the mat, down the steps, unable to force an entrance; they were sitting inside on the stairs; Adela felt sure they had even got up to the roof. They were closely packed together. They glared at each new applicant who joined the throng. Some were pretty. There was a gayety too loud to be real about them. Some were haggard and worn; they looked goaded by fear and by want.

"That look hasn't got on my face yet," thought Adela. "It is only in my soul now; it will soon show, and then——"

Great, awful, paralyzing despair showed in many faces. To some the doors were always shut. They all looked anxious, and Adela shivered. The suffering, the stolid misery, showed her what she would come to.

At last a man came down the stairs. He asked questions; he told them to move up, and they crushed together closely; he shut the front door. He was a dark, wretched-looking little person. He walked round, speaking, looking, just as if these women were slaves in a market or as if he were buying cattle. He sent five or six into a room on the left. Adela wished she could shrink and crawl out of the front-door crack and run away.

He came up to her.

"Will you follow those ladies in there?" he said, "I would like to speak to you."

She did as he asked. They were the selected band and they all were good-looking. That was not pleasing to Mrs. Percy. What about the talent for housekeeping? He asked no questions about it. Most of the others were hastily leaving.

The ugly little man took each one into a little office. Some were quickly dismissed, others stayed with him longer. Adela could not hear a word of what was said.

"I'm going," whispered a pretty girl. She sat on the grubby sofa—the place was filthy—beside Adela. "I don't like this; I don't like the look of him. Housekeeper!" she repeated with derision,—“a fine housekeeper he wants!” She turned to depart.

"Do you think he wants a housekeeper for himself?" Adela clutched her arm. "I thought he must be an agent of some sort."

"I don't know what he wants, but I don't like the look of him," answered the girl quietly. "You're not his line. Don't you give him your name nor address. I'm off. I won't wait. I was a fool to come here, but I'd be a bigger one if I stayed!"

At last it was Adela's turn for an interview.

"I hope you are not tired," said the man politely as he gave her

a chair. He seated himself very close to her. "You came in answer to my advertisement?"

"Yes," said she faintly.

"I want a housekeeper. I may as well be frank. I am a married man. My wife does not live with me, and I am cruelly lonely. I have suffered." He spoke in a semi-tragic tone; Adela did not like it, it was affected; he edged his chair nearer hers and put his arm along the back of the one on which she sat. "I want a charming lady to amuse me, to look after things for me; I have a beautiful flat at Earl's Court. If you could call again about six o'clock I would take you to see my rooms. His arm was gradually slipping off the back of her chair. She knew she ought to say something, but her tongue was tied by fright.

"I would not keep house for a man," she said firmly.

"I am prepared to pay liberally. You would not have any menial work to do; I would see that a lady, who fulfilled my requirements, had all she desired."

"I could not do that, so I had better say good-morning."

"Don't go. I have taken quite a fancy to you and I feel sure you would suit. Come back and see my flat before you decide. Come this evening about six——"

"No, thank you; good-morning," and she walked out.

So much for the housekeeper's post. The harmless one of selling tea was left, so she hailed an omnibus and went to Holborn. The tea warehouse was equally crowded, but the man was civil and business-like.

"We require security," he said. "One hundred pounds would do."

"Then I won't, for I haven't one hundred pence," said Adela.

The other places on her list were in different parts of London—undaunted, she went to each one. There was no success anywhere. She had no security, no capital, little experience, and so, at six o'clock, she was tired, hungry, and faint; she had eaten nothing since breakfast and she had not found anything to do. What a fool she was! A housemaid's place was the very thing for her; housemaids were needed. It was too late to go to a registry office; she resolved to go to one at ten o'clock the next morning.

She dined on a poached egg and two bananas. She had no intention of going back to Nancy until the girl's dinner was over. Adela accepted the sofa, houseroom, and breakfast, but she would not dine at the Hen Run.

"It was a hopeless day," said Nancy. She considerably refrained from saying, "How ghastly you look!" which had been her first impulse. Adela's depressed air and slow conversation told the result of her excursioning.

"I ought to have realized that with no training there was no place in the world for me; even my school-teaching before I married would not be any help to me here. How could I sell tea? or be in a show room? or do complexion treatment? They all want a premium or security or something in the shape of money. I might have thought of it this morning. Nancy, I am going to be the one thing in this world that is wanted—that is, a housemaid!"

"You will never stand it."

"I am strong."

"Think of living with the other servants!"

"I'll go to a small house."

"And have to carry up the coal!"

"Well, my arms are stout; I could do that at a pinch."

The registry office had plenty of situations on its books. Housemaids were needed and Adela rejoiced. She saw a lady who was willing to pay twenty pounds a year. She engaged Adela, provided the references were satisfactory. The lady made an appointment to call on Miss Furnival the next afternoon. Alas! when the seeker of a housemaid came she climbed the two flights of stone stairs which led to Miss Furnival's abode and arrived there in a bad temper. Then she refused to take a servant from such a little flat. She feared that Adela could not be sufficiently trained. When Adela told her she was not living with Nancy as a servant the lady's wrath knew no limit.

She had been deceived. Adela was a wicked woman who was trying to worm her way into respectable houses by means of a fraudulent reference. She would inform the registry office at once; it had no business to have such a person on its books. That part of her assertion she faithfully carried out, for the evening post brought a letter to say the registry office had removed Adela Percy's name from its lists and could not assist her to find a situation.

Mrs. Percy clenched her teeth and said nothing. Nancy stormed.

"It is no good," said Adela. "Nothing is any good. Waterloo Bridge is the only place for me now."

"I will go and explain."

"Leave it alone, it is only another block in the traffic," said Mrs. Percy. She tried to be gay, but another day of the same adventures, the same disappointments, reduced her proud spirit to pulp. That evening all she said was, "No luck," and Nancy considerably asked no questions.

"I brought you a *Lady's Friend*," said Miss Furnival as they were going to bed. "You may find something in it."

"Listen, Nancy," cried Adela after some moments of anxious reading, "I am going to see them." She read:

WANTED—A lodge-keeper, the widow of a soldier killed in action preferred. Must be young and very active. Wages, £1 ls. a week, coal and light provided. Apply personally on Monday morning at Messrs. Graves & Gudgeon's, 44 Bedford Row, W. C."

"A lodge-keeper! But your husband was not a soldier."

"An officer, a distinction without a difference. I am strong and active. What papers have I? The notice of his death: 'I regret to inform you that your husband, Bertram Percy, Canadian Regiment, was killed at Pardeberg on the 30th of January.' Won't that do? That is proof enough, and you'll do for a respectability reference this time."

"The paper does not say where the lodge is."

"What does it matter? It says one pound and one shilling a week, think of that! and fuel and light! I'll go if they will have me. I hope I may get it; I hope I may."

VI.

It was a cold day early in November. Adela Percy got out of a third-class carriage at Hambleton Station. She had one little trunk which contained her worldly goods. Nancy had given her the money to buy two black and white print dresses, some aprons, and shoes."

"I've started," she said to herself, "on another track."

Her heart was beating with terror of the unknown. It seemed weeks since she had interviewed Messrs. Graves & Gudgeon and then had been summoned by Mr. Walters, the steward of Springfield. Everything had been settled slowly but securely. Mr. Walters had engaged her and told her what she would have to do.

"Nancy, I've got the book of the words." This was after the final interview. "I am engaged as lodge-keeper at Springfield. I have to keep the gate tidy. There is a small garden. 'Do you know how to work in the garden?' said that confiding man. Now, do I?"

"What did you say?"

"I said, 'That depends on what you put in the garden.' That was judicious, wasn't it? It's all right. He sends one of the under-gardeners down to lay it out—that sounds as if they were preparing me for burial—in the spring and in the autumn, and I have just got to weed it. I can weed. I have to be ready to open the gate at any time. Fancy me in the middle of the night, with my martial cloak around me, flying out; they supply the cloaks, and they have hoods; they are made of scarlet. I can wear scarlet.

'I shall go brave in scarlet,
I shall be bold in red.'

"Who owns Springfield?"

"Mr. Bridlington."

"You will be very lonely at night."

"No, I won't. There will be a pay-day to sustain me. Think of knowing that my money will come with the regularity of Saturday morning! That will be bliss. The only checks I have had have been drawn on the bank of life, and though the world owes me a living, the checks are always returned to me marked 'refer to drawer.'"

In spite of Adela's gayly assumed confidence in the future she stood on the station platform a forlorn figure, huddled up in a cloak. Hope and the pride of life had left her.

"Is there a cart here from Springfield?" she said to the solitary porter.

"Yes, outside. Shall I take your box?"

"Please do."

There was a tax-cart waiting. The step looked as high as the wall of a garden. A young groom was driving.

"You are Mrs. Percy?—for Springfield?" he asked. "Jump up. Lots of room for the luggage behind Jim."

She presented the porter with sixpence and they drove off.

She could not talk; she sat there tongue-tied.

At last he spoke. "How do you think you will like it down here? Ever been lodge-keeper before?"

"No. I think I'll like it."

"Me and my Missis live at the farther lodge. She has been cleaning yours. Mr. Bridlington had it all painted and done up for you. There's a bit of furniture in it; it is rough, but it is clean. It isn't a bad billet. It's lonely a little and you never can leave your gate. Did they tell you that?"

"Then how can I do my shopping?"

"The baker calls, so does the butcher; they send milk from the farm. The other stuff—well, I buy tea and bits of things for my Missis on Saturday night. I can get you anything you need then."

"Thank you," said Adela. "What is the name of my lodge?"

"The East Lodge, Springfield Park. You have to carry the post-bag up to the Big House every afternoon. The post-man goes in the morning, but at four he leaves the bag at your door and you have to take it up. You won't mind that?"

"I won't mind anything. I'm so glad to be in the country."

"You lost your husband in the war?"

"Yes." For the rest of the way no one spoke.

The East Lodge was built of gray stone. It was covered with the bare branches of rose-trees. There were two flower-beds in front of the door—the bulbs were already sprouting in them.

"It's pretty in summer," he said. "It looks dreary now."

A young woman came to the door, evidently the man's "Missis."

Adela and she carried in the trunk. There was a good fire in the kitchen; a front room was arranged as a sitting-room—just the stiff cottage arrangement which no doubt was considered the correct thing in the circles Adela had joined. Upstairs there were two large bedrooms.

Mrs. Frame was young and pretty; she poured out all her troubles to Adela: a two-year-old child and a baby of a few months; the small quarters were trying, and the fear that the increasing family would make Mr. Bridlington turn them out was a constant worry to her and to Bill, the husband.

"Since old Mr. Bridlington died nothing has been altered," said Mrs. Frame. "They say the heir, his nephew, will just keep things as they were, but I'm afraid, and so is Bill. Well, now, if you think you don't want me any more I must go home. Our lodge is about half a mile across the park. Come over to-morrow when you take up the post-bag. Oh, here's your cloak. Mr. Walters sent it down." She put on her own red one with the hood.

"How pretty you look!" said Adela involuntarily.

Mrs. Frame laughed. "I expect you've seen better days," she said, gazing at Adela. "They did say Mr. Walters told someone that you were a lady. I begin to think it is true."

Adela was left alone to find out things for herself. The cottage had been newly papered with simple flower papers. The paint was white. It was all bare and sweet and clean. She unpacked and then made herself a cup of tea. She found bread and butter in the little larder and some fresh eggs, so she boiled one and then cleared away the things and washed them up. It was delightful, just like playing at keeping house.

She aired her sheets—Nancy had lent her three—and made up the bed in the top front room. It faced south and was nearest the road.

She sat down by the fire to think and to feel glad before she went to bed. First she had to save up and pay Nancy, then—well, then she would feel free again and out of debt. She went to bed after locking the windows and the doors. She had reached a haven, a haven of peace; it was good to feel at rest.

An uneventful circuit of days rolled by. She did her own work; she learned, taught by Mrs. Frame, to wash her own clothes; at first she had only scrubbed the skin off her hands; she cleaned and sang and was happy. Her red cloak and hood were very becoming to her; health and work and food were giving her a color; she was better looking than she had ever been before, but she did not think of it. Nancy had promised to come down as soon as she could get away. Adela had the house cleaned over and over again and her room ready. She found plenty

of employment and she never felt dull, though sometimes she did feel solitary. Mrs. Frame had accepted her as a lady and came down to advise and to help. Adela saw no one else. She found she could help her kind adviser by going up and taking the baby to spend the day with her. Her writing prospered in the peace of the country, and the editor of the *Family Sentinel* was glad to accept her story and to ask for more. Then she paid Nancy.

One afternoon late in December Adela got a shock. The days were very dark. She had lighted her lamp and was playing with Mrs. Frame's baby when she heard a shout of "Gate!"

She seized her key,—all the gates at Springfield were kept locked,—threw on her red cloak, and rushed out.

"Gate!" yelled a man impatiently again.

"Coming, sir," called Adela, using the word she had been drilling herself to say for some time. In her haste she left the front door open; the fire-light was dancing, the child was crawling about, and the interior of her room showed as clearly to the man on the horse as if he had been inside it.

She supposed it was Mr. Bridlington returning from hunting. She opened the gate as quickly as possible and waited for him to pass through. He rode close beside her, so close that his horse almost touched her. She felt his eyes on her face; it was clear in the light from the cottage door. She gave him a cursory glance and did not raise her eyes again, for he was looking at her; he was staring hard at her. She knew him. It was Mr. Crossley! He had not recognized her; he would not be able to do that. She pulled her hood over her face. He was staying at the Big House. Oh, how she hoped he would soon go away!

"Good-night," he said as he rode away.

"Good-night, sir," said Adela. She said the "good-night" quietly and the "sir" loudly. If only the ground would swallow her! But perhaps he had not seen her face. He gave a glance at the open door of the cottage as he rode by it.

Adela went in. She had lost her gayety. What did anything matter? She did not, she would not, believe she had seen Mr. Crossley. Her heart said she had seen him. She could afford to laugh at her heart. She felt gay, shaking, nervous, and apprehensive all at once.

Two or three days passed and she heard and saw nothing of him; either he was not there or else he had forgotten all about her.

There was a large party staying at the Big House, and she had to open the gate frequently to men who were going to or coming back from the meet.

After this Adela was never alone. She always had one of the Frame children with her; to be alone meant she had time and opportunity for thought.

"Mr. Bridlington was asking me if you had any children," said Bill when he came one afternoon to fetch the baby home. "I suppose he saw you with one of mine."

"I would not know Mr. Bridlington if I saw him," she said. "I suppose I have opened the gate for him."

"Well, I'd better be taking the youngster home; good-night, Ma'am," and Bill stumped off.

She sat by the fire. She was tired of writing and she had done all the work in the house for that day. It was queer how Jim and his wife called her "Ma'am;" they seemed to think she belonged to a different world; they never asked any questions. They were the good old stuff and respected her. How lucky she had been to get the lodge and to come to Springfield to be alone, for no one whom she could have liked would have associated with her under the circumstances; Bill and his wife were kind and friendly, but never intimate.

The tea-things were still on the table. She felt loath to stir. Time—which had lulled the memory of the past torture and poverty to rest in her mind—brought back the consciousness of the happiness she had missed. She ached to have a little of it. She was young. She saw her past life, that bald dream of happiness, which had not materialized, with her husband Bertram; he had not loved her. She was strong; she would live until she was ninety or a hundred, shunted on the way-side! She had peace and calm, but no love, no happiness. And she knew that she would never have it.

She looked at the room. It was dainty. She had valiantly eschewed the temptation to have tea, as if she were in a station with the train going to start; she had a little tea-table with a white cloth on it, dull blue cups and saucers, and a blue tea cosey. The fire in the grate was good and the brasses shone; she cleaned them well every day. The sofa, changed from a hideous monstrosity into a beautiful resting-place by blue and white chintz and blue and pink cushions, was near the fire; a few prints on the walls were all of ships; she had picked them up in Hambleton on one of the few occasions Mr. Walters had given her a day off to go shopping. She loved the sea—the sea which had thrown her what she wanted and she had not accepted the gift. A queer old picture of Fame was on the narrow, high chimney-piece, and a china dog, hideous but beloved, was there too. Two old brass candlesticks left by the last inhabitant of the lodge held candles; the room was not what one would have expected to see in a four-roomed cottage. She wore a black and white print gown and a large white apron. The gown fitted her; she had a beautiful figure; the dress was plain and a little long, a band of insertion went round her throat; in theory she was arrayed like an upper housemaid, plainly and

perfectly; in practice she appeared like a duchess ready to act in private theatricals.

There was a knock at the front door. It opened into the sitting-room. She had not heard anyone call "Gate!" It might be Bill, though he always came to the kitchen door; it might be a parcel, but the postman had gone by. She had no wish that any curious, casual person should pry into her room and so into her life,—a room is often the open book of a woman's heart; the big table in the corner, covered with manuscript, showed she had a different profession from the ordinary dweller in a lodge. She opened the door; there stood a man—a man. It was Mr. Crossley!

"Did you want me to open the gate, sir?"—the sir was faint—said Adela from behind the entrenchment of the door. "I will do it at once."

"I have come to see you. Don't pretend you don't know me. I recognized you in the half-light the other night; I have not been able to get away from Pitts and the others since then. I have something to say, and I can say it better if you will allow me to come in. Some passer-by might wonder to whom you are talking if you keep me to cool on the doorstep."

"Come in, then. Not that I care what they say, but I should hate any gossip. You are staying at the Big House?"

"I am. What a greeting! Aren't you glad to see me? I have tried to find you everywhere. I am more than glad to come across you here in safety."

She gripped the back of a chair. She had to hold on to something. She felt as if he had brought a warrant for her execution.

"You will tell—you will tell who I am and where you met me; you will ruin me." She stopped. "Do you know"—her tone was quiet yet full of woe—"that before I came here I nearly starved?—that I was driven to it? You will tell Mr. Bridlington and he will turn me out. Oh, what am I saying?"

"Is that your opinion of me?"

"No, you might do it accidentally. If you knew what torture meant and then after it peace, you would—— Please go away from here and don't come back again."

"I promise to say nothing about you to anyone. But they were all talking about you. Pitts saw you one day when you brought up the letters. He——"

"He can do as he likes; I don't mind what he says."

"Why won't you treat me as a friend? Have I ever been anything else?"

"No. Don't you see that I must live my life quietly? If anyone

had seen you coming here now they would say—— I am alone; I have no one in the whole of God's earth to take any care for me, and——"

"I quite see. And now sit down. I can't until you do. I have brought you a message from Mr. Bridlington. I come in peace, not in war."

"Why does Mr. Bridlington use you as a messenger? Sit on the sofa." She smiled, and all the old charm came back and more of it, for she was rounded, happier looking, her eyes shone; she was the Adela he loved again, but he did not look at her because he could not bear to do so. "Have you had any tea?"

"I would like some now."

"I will make it. No, don't come with me. I am used to it."

"Do you mean to say that you do all your own work? You clean the house? Surely you should get some one—some woman—in."

"And let the whole world know I am masquerading? No, thank you. I do everything and I like it." She glanced at him from her big blue eyes shaded by such long lashes. "I really like it, and I think"—she spoke modestly—"that it suits me."

"Yes, it does suit you."

"You will not be able to eat any dinner," she said, laughing, as he ate bread and butter and drank three cups of tea.

"I don't mind that. Besides, we don't dine until a quarter past eight to-night; they expect some people from town."

"And now for the message. Has my master any fault to find with the way I clean the yard? or open the gate? or weed the flower-beds? There are no weeds in winter."

"Your master has no fault to find with you. He hates the fate which sent you here, for he knows that you are not strong enough for this life. Walters told him all about you. My message is that on Sunday morning, if you would care to go to church, you are welcome to, no one ever wants this gate opened on Sunday. Bill will drive you to Hambleton in the tax-cart and put it up at the Inn, so you can both go to church. Mr. Bridlington thinks you must be lonely and that a little gentle intellectual treat would be good for you."

"It is kind of him and I would like it extremely. I suppose he would not mind if once or twice I stayed with the Frame children and let Mrs. Frame go with her husband? She does want to show her new hat."

"Don't let the exchange take place too often, then I think it will be all right."

"He must be a decent sort. How did he come to think of it?"

"Oh, everyone said you were superior, you know."

"Superior! Is that what they call me? I am not at all superior."

"You are not a typical soldier's wife. Why didn't you speak to me that night you opened the gate for me?"

"Why didn't you speak to me?"

"I looked at you as hard as I dared."

"I looked too until I——"

"Until you let your eyes fall. Shall I tell you why I did not speak?"

"Do."

"No, I think I can't now. I went to Bill Frame and asked questions about you."

"Mr. Bridlington went too, Bill told me."

"Did he?" Mr. Crossley was quite indifferent.

He stayed until it seemed as if he would have to run to get back and dress for dinner at a quarter-past eight. "May I come again?"

"No, thank you."

"I must and I will. Let me come in a week."

"Well, then, in a week."

"A whole week is awfully long. Couldn't you let me come on Wednesday—this is Thursday—or on Monday; that is a good day, and you can tell me how you liked going to church."

"No, this day week. I have work to do and visitors are unsettling."

"I wish I could unsettle you, you are as firm as a rock," he remarked sadly.

"Will you give Mr. Bridlington my humble respects or my humble duty and thanks for his kindness? I don't know how I ought to phrase it; tell him my humble duty and thanks, that sounds best."

She made him a courtesy, she would not shake hands with him.

"When you are serious you are so much more dangerously attractive than when you are laughing. Don't make me a courtesy again. I think, before I go, that it is only fair to tell you I am Mr. Bridlington."

"You are Mr. Bridlington! What have you done with your other name?"

"The old man was my uncle, and he left all he had to my brother and myself on condition we took the name. I did not tell you in town because I did not know whether it were really true."

"Wait," she called,—“wait; I want to ask you if you knew—did you know who Mrs. Percy was? Was I taken here out of pity? Did you tell Graves & Gudgeon?"

"No."

"Then it was not your charity?"

"No. They sent me a list of names. I saw Mrs. Percy. They said you seemed suitable. I wrote, from purely sentimental reasons, 'take Mrs. Percy if possible.' To tell you the truth, I could not bear to think of anyone with your name being destitute. Then I forgot all about it until you opened the gate. In a week I will answer any more questions you may have ready; I'll be shockingly late now."

He vanished round the back of the lodge and into the path which led to the Big House.

VII.

ADELA, alone, was amazed and ashamed. He said the engaging of Mrs. Percy was inspired by purely sentimental reasons! Everything was lurid, yet it was lurid with joy. And then joy crept away from her mind and astonishment and sorrow took its place. The sorrow came in because she knew she would not be able to renew her friendship with him. A landowner cannot know his lodge-keeper, and contraband visits she must not permit, though the idea of any sort of a visit from him filled her with rapture; still, she could not be labelled again. "You were an adventuress," shouted something inside her brain; "you will be an adventuress again—first for money and then for love." Some horrid little goblin laughed as he said it. What was the good of being a woman at all? The situation was an impossible one; she could not have any further intercourse with Mr. Bridlington. He would understand; perhaps he scorned her now, perhaps— The ceaseless repetition of questions filled her brain, and they crowded out her panacea for all worries, work. Oh, to forget, and when she slept she said, "I will forget," and when she woke she knew that she remembered.

Bill called for her on Sunday morning and they drove to Hambleton. The seats set apart for the servants of the Big House were on the side of the church. The remainder of the congregation had a very good view of them all. Mr. Bridlington sat in the front of the church and looked at her. She resolved that the next Sunday should find her sitting down by the door, where she could see and not be seen.

Once he did not look at her; she gazed at him; he was hard, brown, and strong; his hands were well shaped and his eyes were keen.

A whole week passed and he did not come near her. Some men think a woman likes to be obeyed: she does not, if she care for the man. To disregard her orders needs a certain amount of audacity and self-confidence.

The next Sunday morning Adela asked the old pew-opener to give her a seat by the door. That afternoon the rattle of wheels and a shout of "Gate!" brought her out; it was Mr. Bridlington driving, Mr. Pitts was with him.

She opened the gate and stood there waiting for them to go out—she did not dare lift her eyes. He did not go on.

"I was sorry to see you were not in church this morning," said he. "I hope you were not ill."

"No, sir," said Adela faintly. Then, not wishing him to think her ungrateful, that she had not taken advantage of the trap so thoughtfully placed at her disposal, also afraid lest the privilege of an undis-

turbed contemplation of his straight back and his head where the hair crinkled a little should be taken away from her,—this was wrong of her,—she said: "I was there. I sat in the back of the church; I like it better. I am very grateful to you for letting me go."

He drove on. She shut and locked the gate.

"I say, Bridlington, you have a beauty in your lodge! Is she the victim of an uncontrollable passion for you?" asked Mr. Pitts. "Why does she live here? Why does——"

"Oh, go and ask her," answered his host with impatience. "She is a widow; her husband was killed in South Africa. I can't do much; you know I tried to go with every contingent they sent from Canada? Yes, but they would not have me, so all I can do is to give the widows of soldiers work when there is any going. That is why she is in the East Lodge."

"I must take a little walk there, become faint, and then she'd have to take me in; she——"

"I beg you won't do anything of the sort," said Mr. Bridlington stiffly. "She would resent it."

"Now, look here," said Pitts, "you know that I would call on any pretty woman in the neighborhood. "Why shouldn't I call on her? What difference does the fact of her living in the lodge make? She is a lady."

"Of course."

"Then I shall call on her." Pitts spoke with determination. "If she resents my intrusion, I'll come away. She can only fire a saucepan at me," he added with comfortable assurance; "I understand that is what they do when they quarrel in the married quarters in barracks. She isn't a soldier's widow; you've been swindled! She's in love with some man down here and she is only masquerading; she may be hiding from justice, she——"

"Don't be a fool," said Mr. Bridlington concisely, and Mr. Pitts was silent, but he thought all the more.

The Rector of Hambledon church had noticed the new beauty in the Springfield pew. On Wednesday afternoon, having made inquiries as to the locality in which the lady resided and her station in life, he started to go to the East Lodge to pay a parochial visit. He had heard she was a superior person, evidently in great trouble, having lost her husband in South Africa.

The Reverend Augustus Ponsonby believed in celibacy of the clergy, candles, and incense. He was a very handsome man and a great favorite in the parish. He found Mrs. Percy preparing her tea. He saw her room and he was surprised; he admired her lithe figure, her glorious eyes, and heavy black hair; he stayed to tea—stayed to tea with the lodge-keeper; he never had tea even with the farmers' wives! He

forgot all about her profession as he watched and listened to her. She was so delightfully fresh, different; she did not ask him about the hangings, nor the reredos, nor about any of the things that all ladies of the parish kept on tap for him. How tired he was of the subject! How weary of conversation about missions! He was not shocked when she refused to take a class in his Sunday-school and said she did not want to.

The master of Springfield had been keeping a tight hand on his inclinations. He wanted to go down to the lodge every day and all day. He knew very well that such a course would be foolish. He was perfectly aware of all the difficulties of the situation; he knew how people would talk if they saw him visiting the pretty lodge-keeper. He had his own reasons for preventing the smallest breath of scandal attaching itself to her, and of those reasons she knew nothing. Therefore he surrounded himself with a large party. He had invited a lady down to whose charms Mr. Pitts was the last victim; this was a good way of keeping Pitts out of mischief. Pitts resented these efforts on his behalf and was restive; Mr. Bridlington watched him.

One night after everyone had gone to bed the two men were in the smoking-room. "It is of no use your following me and watching me, Bridlington. I know why it is, and you know that I want to go down to the lodge to see that charming woman; I warn you I'll go as soon as I have a chance. You can't watch me forever, and so you can just lump it."

"Do think of her!"

"I've been doing nothing else ever since I saw her. The way those eyelashes lay on her cheek: it was too awfully lovely. How you can be so impervious to eyelashes I do not understand. I would have given my best horse to have seen her eyes, and——"

"You ought not to think about her."

"You want to keep her for yourself, you——"

"What do you mean?"

"Don't get huffy," said Pitts with excessive geniality. "I know you are not——"

Mr. Bridlington interrupted him. "I meant you should think of Mrs. Percy's reputation; no one must see you going there. If she were to be talked about, it would—it would kill her. You can go and see her if you like, but think of her! She has had an awful life—grief, poverty, pain, and distress; let her be, she is in a haven now."

"Don't you want to go and see her?"

"Always, though I don't go. She told me not to come."

"And she despises you now for obeying her. You've been?"

"Once."

"I intend to discover for myself whether she is a designing minx

or a suffering angel; I'll escape your tender care," and Mr. Pitts grinned with great joviality.

All the house party had gone away. They found Springfield dull, its owner was preoccupied; they did not understand how he could be, with his sudden accession of fortune and their priceless society added to it. Harold had only the society of Mr. Pitts, whom he had besought to stay; certainly Pitts accepted with great alacrity. The truth was that Harold felt he dared not be alone with the lodge and Mrs. Percy so near; there were scandalous tongues everywhere. He wanted to go to her; a dawning hope in his mind made him put the break on, down the hill of Aspiration, and stay away. "You're going too quick, my son," said he to himself. For he hoped much from Nancy Furnival; her presence at the lodge would make things straight. He felt he could wait for her able assistance.

On the Wednesday afternoon on which the laceration of Mr. Ponsonby's heart took place Mr. Bridlington went out to ride. He was alone. He had seen the departure of Mr. Pitts early in the afternoon. Pitts went to tea at Lady Esther MacAdam's. Harold had been bidden too,—Lady Esther had daughters,—but he refused to go. He wanted to ride over the downs to the north of Springfield; he felt that a good, long gallop would take some of the restlessness out of his body and his mind.

Riding over the short grass, temptation seized him. What was to prevent his going to her and explaining the situation. His change of name and of circumstances required accounting for. He took his horse back to the stable, and by that time he had quite persuaded himself that Adela would think it very strange he had not been to tell her all these particulars before. He thought he might safely announce, merely as an item of interest, that he loved her as much as ever and that he intended to wait for her to marry him, as long as she had not promised to marry any other man.

The short December day was graying as he went down the path. He then changed his mind; that way of reaching the lodge was too secretive, he took to the avenue. He had no reason to shun making a bold approach to the front door. What did it matter who saw him? He had a perfect right to go to his own lodge. As he reached it he saw a stealthy figure glide out of the shrouding rhododendrons and go close up to the window; evidently, whoever it was wanted to see through the crack of the blind. Here was a clear case for prompt interference by the proprietor of the estate. Harold crept forward and grabbed the window-gazer by the arm. "What do you mean? What are you doing here?"

To his surprise his captive said with amiability: "Shut up! Let my arm!" It was Pitts, whom he had thought safe with Lady

Esther—Pitts calmly looking through the crack of the blind at Mrs. Percy. He was unrepentant and unalarmed.

"Get out of this," said Mr. Bridlington firmly.

"I won't. I've just as much right here as you have. I told you I meant to come. Don't make a row. Look in! Doesn't she look sweet? An absolutely lovely dream?"

Feeling that he could have scalped his friend and enjoyed his torture with joy indescribable, Bridlington pushed him away to get a chance at the crack himself. He muttered something, but he continued to look.

There was Adela exactly as Pitts had described her; she was knitting. A tea-table, the tea-table of Harold's most precious recollection, was by her, and opposite sat a manifestly infatuated person, the Reverend Augustus Ponsonby. "He's staring at her as if he would like to eat her," remarked he with great disgust.

"Let me see," and Pitts shoved him away. "Don't be so selfish; you want to keep it all for yourself. I say, I think we had better go boldly up to the door and call. If we stay growling out here she'll send the Parson out to look for the dog fight, or perhaps she might throw water at us from the windows—ha! ha!" laughed he loudly, forgetting the need for caution in his amusement.

"Now, what's this? Come, get out of here!" Mr. Bridlington turned with astonishment to find his steward, Walters, standing behind them. "We don't allow tramps here. You'd better move on."

"I—er—er—am just calling on Mrs. Percy on a matter of business," said Harold in a tone of humility, and his words were halting. Mr. Pitts could not speak; he had given way to a paroxysm of laughter.

The embarrassment of Walters was tremendous. "Oh sir! I beg your pardon, I did not know you were here;" his humility was immense. "I just—I often give an eye to the lodge when I am passing. Mrs. Percy does not know, sir, and I won't do it again if it interferes in any way——"

"I hope you will do it as usual, it does not interfere in any way," said Harold. "You are quite right, the place is lonely, too lonely."

"Yes, sir, thank you, sir," and the steward vanished, but not before Mr. Pitts said gayly, "I too am having my eye on Mrs. Percy."

"Shut up!" said Bridlington. "Come, we'll have to knock at the door now."

VIII.

A DOUBLE knock startled Adela. Mr. Ponsonby jumped; he said with uneasiness, "I must be moving on."

She opened the door, and when she saw the two rather shamefaced visitors said, "Did you want to speak to me?"

"Yes," said Harold. "Did you hear rather a disturbance outside

your window?" He introduced Mr. Pitts and they came in. Adela was not perturbed, she felt secure in the presence of so many people, and she was glad to see him. She forgot that Mr. Ponsonby made talking his profession; he never talked scandal, he only lamented the awful circumstances of some parishioner's fall from grace. He gazed with curiosity at Mr. Bridlington, whom he had wanted to meet. He disapproved of the way Adela received the two men; he disapproved of their coming at all; he disapproved of everything, of his own feelings also. Having just felt that he could almost relinquish his most cherished and attractive conviction, his belief in celibacy of the clergy, if she had been in a different position, an unwonted passion of wrath seized him when these intruders entered. They accepted her offer of tea, and she (forgetting that the past was dead; she had often assured herself of that, and it was queer of her to be so oblivious of what she had hitherto considered an unalterable fact) began to talk to Harold in all the old, attractive way, not at all in the method and on the lines of the woman who looked after the lodge!

"Do you remember the pleasant tea-parties we had on board the Amsterdam?" inquired Harold, forgetting the absolute necessity for silence in regard to any former meeting between himself and Mrs. Percy.

"Of course I do," she answered, "and the day you——"

Mr. Pitts coughed and asked if he might have a drink of water. The situation was growing interesting, but he did not intend that Mr. Ponsonby should share any of it. What fools they both were to tell anyone they had met before!

The Rector rose to go. He pressed Mrs. Percy's hand with unnecessary violence and asked Mr. Bridlington for a subscription to the choir fund, which Harold, with great liberality, gave then and there.

They stayed some time after the departure of Mr. Ponsonby. Pitts thought Mrs. Percy was even more charming than he had dared imagine. He was very quiet; he left most of the talking to Harold. Pitts was thinking of the ready-made scandal which the Rector had taken away with him to relate at his next dinner-party.

They walked home just in time for dinner.

"Do you want to marry her?" asked Pitts.

"Yes."

"Well, then, hurry up and tell her so. Can't you muzzle that Parson somehow? He'll tell you knew her before; he will create such a stir as has not been known here since the war with France and they were afraid Bonaparte was coming. You must acknowledge, Bridlington, it sounds fishy. Can't you hear him telling everyone? 'The pretty woman who takes care of Mr. Bridlington's East Lodge is a

former friend of his! He met her on board ship, he goes down to see her after dark,' etc., etc. Can't you guess the rest?"

Harold stopped. "What a fool I was to say anything—a fool to go and see her at all with that prowling hyena about! I never thought there could be danger from him!"

"There is the worst; I have heard of him before."

The next evening the Rector dined at Lady Esther MacAdam's. As a great secret he related his experience when calling on Adela; he lamented the infatuation of Mr. Bridlington; he hoped there would be no disgrace to the county. Lady Esther promised, though shocked, to guard the absorbing item of news safely.

For some days Harold dared not look down the East Avenue. To even drive past the gate he would have considered foolish, so worried was he by Mr. Pitts's words.

"Out in the West," he remarked when Pitts began another sermon on the same text, "no one would have said nasty things about me or about her if I spoke to her, just because she lives there and I live here. I would have shot any man who dared."

"Perhaps so. But you forget the thing that kills the world's continued belief in a woman's virtue is when she, for want of money, is obliged to leave one position and take a lower one. It would not matter if she were ugly. It is odd, but no one would say anything about her if she had taken the Dower House and announced she had met you on board ship. There is nothing they won't say while she inhabits your lodge!"

Harold did not answer these wise remarks. He waited impatiently for Sunday and a sight of her.

The church was full that morning, and in the MacAdams' pew, which was next the Bridlingtons' family sheep-pen, Harold saw Frank Savage!

Mr. Bridlington cast an anxious glance behind him; he could not tell whether she were there; he hoped she had not come, but she had.

She walked over to the Inn to wait for the cart. She stood by the gate, not thinking of the present nor of her surroundings, when she heard a hatefully familiar voice.

"Mrs. Percy, how are you? How strange this is! Are you—is it possible you are the lady of the lodge? The story I heard sounded like a pleasant romance,—untrue, of course,—now it seems somewhat like an unpleasant French novel."

"Since when have you found French novels unpleasant? You used to suggest situations somewhat similar."

"I am staying with Lady Esther MacAdam," he said. "I was awfully amused when I heard you were the lady about whom Lady Esther was telling naughty tales. How brilliant of you to come here!"

To live in his lodge! I was frightfully puzzled at first until I got the book of the words. You were clever." There was sickening admiration in his tone. "I told Lady Esther all about you last night; the history did not sound well in a country place. In London it would be an excellent joke; here—well! She said the whole county would cut Mr. Bridlington—our old friend Crossley!"

"Couldn't you have been silent for once in your life?"

"I had to live up to the names you so kindly bestowed upon me just before we parted. I will come and see you when I can safely get away from the espionage of my hostess;" he dropped his voice cautiously; "I never have forgotten you; I think we might come to terms—now."

"I despise you," said she calmly; she was frightened, but she did not show it. "How did Lady Esther MacAdam know of my existence?"

"Through Mr. Bridlington, I suppose. How can I tell? But don't be angry with him for telling such an excellent joke. I would not have resisted the temptation if I had been in his place. They all know now."

Adela walked into the stable yard of the Inn, where Bill was waiting for her, and got into the trap. She did not speak to him. Once or twice he glanced at her face. Her lips were hard set and she looked as if she had been crying. "I think we might come to terms—now," sounded in ceaseless repetition in her brain. He! That brute! Had Harold told? Never, never would she believe that of him. It must have been that little rat he brought with him. Poor Mr. Pitts!

Late that evening she was working to finish a story, for she knew she would have to go out on the tramp again and would need all the money she could get. "Surely," she thought, "I have paid. There cannot be any more scores to settle." She heard a voice shout peremptorily, "Gate!" She went out; it was after ten o'clock. There stood Mr. Ponsonby.

"Good-evening," said Adela.

"Let me in. I want to talk to you."

"It is too late. You can say what you want to say here."

"I can't talk here."

"Very well, then. If you can't talk from the gate, you can go away and come back to-morrow in the daylight."

"Are you aware that I have heard awful things about you? I must tell you. You knew Mr. Bridlington before; they say you are here for no good."

"I know all that," she answered. "They say that I came over to get married and I am an adventuress."

"I heard him refer to a former acquaintance with you, and so I

told Lady Esther. When I mentioned your name to her there was a man there named Savage; he seemed to have known you."

"When you mentioned my name? So you told her. Did you by any chance add that Mr. Bridlington came here the afternoon you paid your first visit?"

"Yes."

"She knew nothing about me before that?"

"I really do not know. She seemed surprised. Why think about her? Think of yourself; go into a sisterhood, a place where you can think; do take my advice, do——"

"And so you told—you, whose profession is Christ's charity. How could you? I know all you want to say."

"You are in an anomalous position and all these men come to see you; you are beautiful; do be careful."

"I intend to be." She walked away and shut and locked the doors and windows of the cottage, and where he went and what he did she neither knew nor cared. The only redeeming feature of it all was she had so speedily discovered who was the informer. There was no doubt that Mr. Ponsonby was guilty, and also, though his story might have created a certain amount of stir, it would have died away if Frank Savage had not happened to be staying at Lady Esther's.

The next afternoon Mr. Ponsonby returned, and Adela told him the whole history of her life since she landed.

"You may think what you like about me," she said, "but you are not to say things about Mr. Bridlington. They are untrue."

Ponsonby retired somewhat crestfallen. Adela spoke as if she were telling the truth, but he did not believe her, it was a clever, plausible invention. The Rector continued his head-wagging until Mrs. Percy had no rag of reputation left.

The atmosphere of the Big House was sultry; a gloom—a sepulchral gloom—had fallen on Harold, also on Mr. Pitts. The former smoked incessantly and was morose, the latter fidgeted and muttered wrathful words.

"And that scandal-monger is the Rector," said Pitts. "As for Mr. Savage, a few moments alone with him and a horsewhip would give me complete joy. Still, he makes no profession; but Ponsonby, he preaches to us every Sunday."

"You are sure, Pitts, quite sure, that she won't see me?"

"Miss Furnival arrived this morning; I had a little conversation with her. Mrs. Percy absolutely refuses to see anyone. She is broken up, and I don't wonder. Miss Furnival told me what an awful time she has had. If I had a chance, I could knock some of Savage's teeth out and not feel sorry."

Harold grunted. "I'm going to the lodge. I won't sit here."

"She refuses to see you."

"I'll have an interview with Miss Furnival. By the bye, I met Lady Esther yesterday."

"Did you?" Mr. Pitts was interested. "Did she cut you?"

"Not wholly; she halved it."

Harold went to the lodge. It was a long time before the door opened in answer to his knock. When Nancy arrived she said, "She can't see you."

"Come outside and let me talk to you."

"Hanging," said she, "would be too good for Mr. Savage. But who told her name?"

"The Rector."

"I thought you had done that."

"Does she think so?"

"Yes, I fancy she does."

He sighed. He had no words ready; truly, the situation was too ghastly. "Look here, you are her friend. I love her. What are you going to do to help me?"

"I can't see that your loving her does any good. They would only say that the attitude of the county towards you had forced you to marry her. How can you kill the scandal? No one would call on her here."

"I don't want them to. I mean, it does not matter. I am not going to live here forever. The world is wide."

"And tongues are long."

"You must help me to cut them off."

"I'll do my best. You don't deserve it, but I'll work for her. She says she is going away with me when I have to go back to town. She is terrified—terrified lest Mr. Savage may turn up here. He said he would; he was rude, he was insulting."

"I'm glad you told me. I'll look after that."

And so the gamekeepers patrolled round and round the East Lodge. All the people on the estate wondered, and all the world talked scandal. But Harold went out every day to pay visits and Mr. Pitts accompanied him. Sometimes they bunglingly tried to mention the calumnies told of the widow in the East Lodge.

"I don't believe we have done any good," said Pitts one day after some old dowager had foiled their utterance of an explanation. "We are not great and successful diplomatists," he added with regret. "You are brave to walk up to the guns in that bold way, but when I see a woman, like a three-masted, square-rigged ship, coming along, I'm ready to fly to the nearest cellar."

Adela Percy had summoned pride of life and all its attendant

swains to her aid. She had assured Nancy that she would never see Mr. Bridlington—"never," asseverated she, and Nancy, who knew little about men and less about women, who was as attractive herself as a stone wall and about as fascinating, believed what Adela said. She could not guess that Adela wanted what she said she didn't want. Nancy did not know that Adela listened and waited for his step on the gravel with a sickening sense that he would never, never come to her. Adela's heart was sore for one word from the man whom she loved. The hurricane had broken even as Mrs. Norton had predicted, and it was devastating as hurricanes usually are.

"Don't you believe he only thinks he *ought* to see me?" asked Adela.

Nancy thought so and said so.

"I am too proud to listen," announced Mrs. Percy with her head up. "I am not done for. The *Family Sentinel* will take all I can do; you and I can live together. I'll come to London."

"And forget all about these wretched men." Nancy felt so wise. "You will be so happy when once you get away from here."

One night Adela heard stealthy steps outside the house. She got out of bed and opened the little window gently and noiselessly. It was after twelve. It was Mr. Bridlington. She watched him for a long time, and was it her imagination, or did he murmur "Adela" as he turned away?

"Mr. Bridlington wanted to marry you once," said Nancy.

"Not now. How could he, with his position in the county? They all would cut me. Can't you hear them all saying: 'Poor man, he was caught by a woman at his lodge! Ah, awful infatuation! he was obliged to marry her.' I can see Lady Esther McAdam nodding her old head over my sins. No woman who has any wisdom ruins a man's future; it is too deep a wrong to try and fill up with love! Love counts for nothing these days; no one marries for it, no one cares about it. Thank Heaven, lots of them read about it, or my trade would be done for!"

"Will you see Mr. Bridlington?"

"No, I won't." She would have said yes if he had come and asked her, but he did not do that, he merely sent Mr. Pitts. Nancy interviewed him.

IX.

If ever a man were distracted that man was Harold Bridlington. He felt like an active dog whom everyone tells to lie down. "In the multitude of counsellors there is strength," said a wise man, but to Harold that maxim appeared the height of absurdity and folly. Between the advice and wisdom purveyed by Nancy, not to mention her ill-concealed disapproval of his conduct, the wise admonitions of Mr.

Pitts, who was sensible, if despairing, Harold would willingly have seen his advisers in the train or, better still, on board a ship without a return ticket. Nancy kept Adela out of his way; he knew Nancy influenced her against him. It was hard, for the only way out of it all was to have a long explanation with Adela. She was the only one who had anything to forgive; he knew he had been very indiscreet; she was the only one to whom he owed anything, and those idiots assumed airs of horror and surprise when he doggedly insisted on seeing her.

After wasting his breath and his afternoons in arguing with them he maintained a stolid and morose silence, but he bided his time.

Suddenly Adela resumed her duties. She took the post-bag up to the Big House. Nancy had been doing it for her. Afternoon after afternoon passed, and she made her way up there unmolested. Harold was quite aware of her occupation; he was lying low. "Gimme time," said Br'er Rabbit. Harold Bridlington wanted the same thing.

One afternoon a drizzling rain was falling; there was snow on the ground and the rain changed to sleet; it was very cold.

Adela started to go to the house with the post. She left Nancy asleep by the sitting-room fire. At first she had been afraid of meeting some of the servants, who might have been rude to her, but the phlegmatic calm of the man who opened the door reassured her.

Harold was wandering along the thick trees which were between the lodge and the house. He saw Adela coming from his proud eminence, a rock behind a screening bush. About two hundred yards behind her, following her, was a man. Who was he? The stranger slipped on a piece of ice, made even more slippery by the half-rain, half-snow, and he swore. The voice was exactly like Frank Savage's. Harold caught up to Adela. She started as she felt him grip her arm.

"Don't make a noise! Savage is following you. Turn to your left." He told Mr. Pitts that it was the most awful moment of his life; he feared she might tell him to go, to leave her at once; all the future hung on what she might say as he seized her arm. She obeyed him. He led her through the trees and they went back, away from the house. Savage passed them quite close; he was going faster, was afraid of missing his quarry. "Come on here." Harold held her hand. It was a passive hand; he could feel little electric thrills up and down his own arm. He took her over to a big rock which made a shelter from the wind and the rain.

"He must not find me here with you," she cried. "He will say—what will he not say?"

"Keep quiet and he shall not find you," said Harold.

"Nor you?"

"Nor me. I want to talk to you. Nancy says you hate me. She

says you won't see me. It is only fair to give me a chance; even a man tried for murder has someone to defend him. May I defend myself?"

"Yes."

"Well, first thing, I love you—love you—love you!" He set his teeth hard as he spoke. "I want to marry you. I know, Miss Furnival told me, you blame me for all this; I would give all I possess to have prevented it; I never dreamed the Rector could have been so horrible. The rest you know. I mean you know that Savage told he had met you when he heard Lady Esther laughing about the pretty Mrs. Percy."

"He said you told."

"Of course, he would say that. You did not believe him?"

"Where is he now? Has he gone up to the house?"

"He won't follow you here," but a crashing of boughs and a heavy footfall proclaimed that Mr. Savage had struck a track of some sort. Adela involuntarily drew nearer Harold.

"Don't let him find me—don't let him find me!" besought she.

He took her hand; she was trembling, she did not withdraw it. He put one arm round her. He watched Savage strike a match, which the wind kindly blew out. "Keep still," he said. He could hear the snorting and puffing of the man among the bushes, and then—welcome sound!—the voice of Hatch, the head gamekeeper.

"Now, then, what are you doing here?" said Hatch.

"I'm Mr. Savage, from Lady Esther MacAdam's."

"Well, then, sir, I'll show you the way home." Hatch was polite but firm.

"We are safe,"—he let his arm fall away from her,—"*now* give me an answer."

"It was true," she said. "I must explain about Mr. Savage. I've been a fool, and I did say that I was coming over to get married. I had no money and no home, so I took all I possessed and——"

"I have heard all about that from Miss Furnival. I want your future; I want you to spend it with me; I don't want your past annotated by yourself."

"I am horrid. You must not think I am better or nicer than I am. I can't marry you."

"Why not? In a month I sail for Canada. I want to look after the ranch. My brother is there and he is anxious to get over here. Will you come with me?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I won't have you sacrifice yourself for my sake. I—why do you make me say these things? I have no reputation, I—oh, can't

you see you must not think of marrying me; it would not be right. Think of the county people!"

"What have they got to do with it?"

"You have to live here. It is your home."

"Not at all. This is my brother's place; I have just been looking after it for him. It was not left to me, I prefer the ranch, so—the old man knew it—my share was money. I can give you bread and butter, but not a place and a mansion like the Big House. A home on the ranch and love—is all I have to offer you; if you are still what you said you were, in search of a fortune, you will refuse them, and if——"

"Why didn't you tell me before? I—that alters everything."

"I kept that. Pitts knew. Will you come?"

"I'll come, gladly."

"I am not satisfied. Are you coming because you want to show me you were not looking for——"

"Stop! I love you! that is what would take me out to the ranch."

"You need not worry about these people. Out there we don't imagine evil, as they do."

"Come and tell Nancy."

"I hate Nancy, but I'll come. In exactly four weeks from to-day you start with me in the Amsterdam for Boston. You can choose the day you will marry me. I leave it to you, but I think the Saturday before the ship sails would suit me best."

"Then Sunday would be such a long day with you on my hands to amuse," said the old Adela with a little laugh. It did him good to hear her.

"That's a happy laugh," said Harold.

"Come on, I want my tea. Hurry!"

Hand-in-hand they tore back to the lodge. Mr. Pitts and Nancy were having a solemn consultation when they opened the door.

"You are both coming to dine with us to-night," said Bridlington.

"No, we're not coming," answered Adela. "I have nothing to wear but a striped cotton rag. What would your servants say?"

"Well, then, I intend to come here immediately after my dinner. Pitts, you can take Miss Nancy up to play the banjo for you. I don't care what the servants say. My brother won't mind when he comes into his own, and by that time, Adela, you and I will be beyond his skyline!"

"You've buried the hatchet?" asked Nancy.

"Yes," said Harold, while Mr. Pitts performed wild dances round them, "and we dug up a wedding-ring while we were conducting the funeral."

AVOWALS

BEING THE FOURTH OF A NEW SERIES OF
"CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN"

By George Moore

Author of "The Untilled Field," "Evelyn Innes," etc.



IN reading "War and Peace" we are surprised at the skill with which Tolstoy pleads that Napoleon was a mere creature of circumstance, and that the enterprises of which he was the central figure were merely forces of nature which alternately drove men eastward and westward. Tolstoy pleads his case with the same skill as De Quincey pleaded that Judas Iscariot was a traitor only in the technical sense of the word, for Judas, according to De Quincey, believed more than any other disciple in Christ's power, and led the Roman soldiers into the Garden of Gethsemane so that Christ should delay no longer, but declare Himself King of Judea. But De Quincey's essay was only intended as an exhibition of his dialectical skill, whereas Tolstoy would not have us doubt the sincerity of his belief that Napoleon was without military genius, and that his battles would have been won without his strategy. He would persuade us that the Russian General who refused to follow up Napoleon's retreat was a man of extraordinary genius, for it was part of Tolstoy's ethical scheme to set this General's fatalism against Napoleon's individualism; and his dilatoriness is extolled as a virtue, and he is admired as one of the wise fools who, knowing that the hand of Providence is everywhere, are content to allow Providence to work for them—a more difficult case than De Quincey had to plead, for little is known about Judas; but Napoleon lived in a blaze of notoriety, and unless we assume that life yields no evidence whatever, we must believe in his genius.

Several years passed, and during these years Tolstoy wrote "Anna Karenina." Like "War and Peace," it is full of ball-rooms, barrack-rooms, race-courses, farmyards, and hayfields, and Tolstoy seems as desirous as ever of describing the outward aspect of life. Here we might linger to debate whether the tale-teller should separate a story from circumstance, or should describe circumstance, letting the story find its way out as best it can. We will leave this interesting and instructive discussion to another æsthetician; for our present purpose

is not to consider Tolstoy as a tale-teller—our curiosity is directed towards the man, and we are going to seek the man in the book; and in this book, as in the first book, we discover that Tolstoy had an aim other than to reveal to us human instincts; and this aim appears to be to prove that if a woman leave her husband and live with another man, even though she obtain a divorce and marry again, her moral character loosens and disintegrates; that a woman's character is dependent upon the marriage tie; that if that tie be broken, she will find herself sooner or later unable to bear the strain of life, and will throw herself under a passing train. We must assume that this is Tolstoy's intention, for he is careful not to endow Anna with any characteristics which would prevent her from living happily with her lover. Anna is presented to us as a woman highly endowed; she has beauty and courage; there is nothing in her character to prevent her from living happily with her lover. In real life she would have lived happily, and Tolstoy knows it. Everyone's list of acquaintances furnishes instances of women who, though they failed to live happily with one husband, succeeded in living happily with another; his instinct must have revealed to him this primary truth. But he put aside all his experience, and closed his eyes to his instincts, and wrote a long book with a view to promulgating an eccentric doctrine derived from the reading of texts. He always suffered from the disease of doctrine, in his earliest writings, and the disease developed astonishingly between writing "Anna Karenina" and the "Kreutzer Sonata." If Tolstoy had not been a great reader he would have been a great writer. Years were spent in long, close, comparative examination of the different texts of the gospels, and the result of this examination was a number of books, books which revealed to us Tolstoy seeking the way of perfection.



"My Confession" tells the story of a man miserable even to the point of hanging himself, though surrounded by every comfort, though watched over by a loving wife, though surrounded by loving children. And it may be doubted if anyone has confessed himself more truthfully, certainly no one has confessed himself so intensely, and the book is freer from doctrine than any of Tolstoy's novels; it is also free from the ugly externality which vexes and bewilders the reader in the novels.

But soon after the production of this admirable book we find him suffering from another attack of doctrine, and this time the doctrine he promulgates is derived from the Fathers. The phrase, "Fornication is a dung-heap, marriage is barley, chastity is wheaten flour," occurs in St. Jerome, and the temper of mind that wrote this was attractive to Tolstoy, and he brooded and hatched a doctrine that might have scared St. Jerome. The monks are reputed to have weighed and de-

finer every sin; but I do not know if they have attempted to describe the exact pleasure a man may take in his wife's beauty; for want of sufficient literary skill their labors have remained hidden in obscure texts. But Tolstoy has literary skill in abundance, and his voice is shrill,—none shriller,—and never has even Tolstoy shrilled louder than in the "Kreutzer Sonata." The story is told in a railway carriage by a man who has murdered his wife, and the murderer attributes his misfortune to a well-fitting jersey.

This austere man is constantly discovering what everyone knows, and his discovery in the "Kreutzer Sonata" is that the pleasure we derive from evening parties is directly or indirectly a sexual pleasure, that the food and the wine and the music and the dancing have no other meaning. We feel moved to answer:

"But, my good Tolstoy, neither has the May day. You are the blasphemer, for you rave against life, and your extraordinary intelligence is, to parody one of your own phrases, but the folly of the wise."

Tolstoy's extraordinarily intense intelligence is the cause of Tolstoy's folly, and his intelligence is extraordinarily intense because it is extraordinarily narrow. Who could not have told him that in the second century Christianity was found to be incompatible with life, and that the Church was invented to enable the world to wag on very much as before? That the Church abolished the Mysteries of Ceres and permitted evening parties? But Tolstoy perceives that evening parties are not a great moral improvement on the Mysteries, and that the clerical answer, that women are not aware of the immodesty of their gowns, is but a subterfuge. Tolstoy sees all this very clearly, and the poor old man thinks he is going to remake humanity. And this reminds me of some ladies in Ireland who think they are going to revive the Gothic.



Tolstoy's writings may be described as long-drawn-out paradoxes, each uglier than the last, until he reaches the ultimate ugliness—"Resurrection." Yet the incident that suggested this story was beautiful; we shall see how it became ugly in Tolstoy's hands. A judge who had tried a Finnish girl for stealing told Tolstoy how one of the jurymen—a man who had never shown any interest in ethical questions before—was so overcome by the thought that he and eleven other sinners should be called to condemn a thirteenth sinner that he obtained permission to visit the girl in prison in order that he might offer himself in marriage. The girl accepted gladly, seeing in a rich marriage only an endless gratification of her instincts. The man perceived in time that she did not understand the sacrifice he was making and withdrew. Some years after he married a girl of his own class and who shared his ideas, but with whom he did not succeed in living

happily. In Nature's tale there is beauty and truth—in Tolstoy's there is certainly no beauty and I think very little truth. It is no more than the ethical problem already treated in "Anna Karenina," that if a woman indulge in illicit love she will sink lower and lower until life becomes unbearable. In "Anna Karenina" the man and the woman are allowed some individuality, in "Resurrection" none at all; and in the person of the man the original story is shockingly violated, he becomes the original seducer just as in an ordinary melodrama; and to get an effect Tolstoy had to send the girl to Siberia, and as this could only be done by an accusation, the girl is accused of administering poison.

This book is Tolstoy's worst book, and it is perhaps the ugliest book ever written. It is without truth or beauty; it is written like a scientific treatise. The artist has grown so callous that he does not seem to have perceived that if the story were to be written at all it should be written without descriptions of externals, as he wrote "My Confession." He has grown so callous that he makes no attempt to adapt his style to his subject, and his description of externals in "Resurrection" is more aggressively external than in any of his other books. The story is littered with descriptions—the appearance of every juryman is described, and one pauses to wonder why he was at such pains to tell us that a certain woman's neck sweated, and to wonder why we are told that the legs of a fowl—a fowl that is killed for dinner ten minutes after—are black and feathery. Age has not softened the cold eye that saw so clearly at thirty. Tolstoy writes at seventy as he wrote at thirty. His mind is like a steel-blue lake reflecting only birchen trees, meagre pines, rocks, and morose, wind-driven clouds, shadow-shapen, conscience-stricken souls wringing their hands; and the shores of the lake are filled with the voices of these agonized souls questioning one another as to the meaning of life and art, and the cries of these spirits are so piercing that they disturb the happy spirits that dwell in the valley of pleasurable waters. "Rest, perturbed spirits of the ghostly lake," they cry. "Here the swimmer swims luxuriously amid implicated islands and overhanging boughs and drifting scents, rejoicing in the beauty of birds and flowers, convinced of the great pagan truths—that life is an end in itself, and that the object of art is to help us to live. Rest, perturbed spirits of the ghostly lake. Why should we leave our valley, where there is music, and nymphs dance under blossoming boughs? You are sure of nothing. The scrolls that you consult tell you nothing. But the flowers and trees and birds tell us all that we need to know. We see the life of the flower, animal life, and human life waxing and waning, and if we perceive no change in the granite rocks it is because the life of the rock lies outside our circle of life. In this valley all men know that the meaning of life is

life, and the artist doubts not that his mission is to reveal the precious essence, to persuade us to love life, and this whether he is painting an everlasting rock or an ephemeral flower."



In the book, "My Confession," Tolstoy tells a story of a traveller who was pursued by a bear and fell down a well in his flight. But the traveller was caught in the branches of a tree, and on looking down he perceived a dragon waiting for him to fall out of the branches, and on looking up he perceived the bear looking down over the edge. On examining the branches that supported him he noticed that they were breaking beneath his weight; but there was some honey on the leaves, and the traveller began licking the honey, unmindful of the bear and the dragon. The parable is an admirable one, but Tolstoy's understanding avails him nothing. He cannot look upon art as the honey that enables one set of men to forget the bear and the dragon; nor can he accept the Church, that enables another set of men to forget the beast above and the beast below. Instead of licking the honey from the leaves, he begins to argue about the relative value of art and morality, and this is how he arrives at the doctrine that a work of art cannot be truly appreciated unless we regard it as a morality, by first postulating that art is a means of communicating our ideas. Tolstoy is a sort of Jules Verne in morals; he takes an undeniable truth—that art is a means of communicating our ideas, proceeds step by step. One of the steps is that since art is a means of communicating our ideas, the best art is necessarily the art that inculcates the best ideas. And, taking this definition of art with them, the logician and ascetic, which are Tolstoy, go together through the museums and libraries measuring the masterpieces; and the conclusions he arrives at are as surprising as any of Jules Verne's—that Shakespeare and Beethoven and Wagner must be put aside as inferior writers, that the greatest works of literary genius are Dickens's "Christmas Carols." I confess to finding the examination of such nonsense somewhat tedious, but for the moment I am a critic, and it is my business. Now, whether art should inculcate moral truths as well as ideas of beauty is a favorite theme of discussion in the newspapers, and I have often wondered why the æstheticians, instead of limiting their argument to the statement that beauty is sufficient, never answer: "The fact that there is no moral standard is a sufficient reason why the artist should eschew morals. The commandment says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' but war is permitted," etc. Morals are like the veering wind, but beauty is a fixed star. The beauty of Homer's verses and Phidias's sculpture have never been called into question.

But art is anterior to morality and more sure, for while the beauty of Homer's verses and the sculpture of Phidias have never been

called into question, all moralities have been repudiated—even the words of Christ. If you were to say to Tolstoy, "You advocate morality, but which morality? There is no standard," he would say, "But there is a standard of good and evil, and that standard you find in the gospels." If you remind him that himself has discovered differences in the various texts, that himself is forced to make a selection from Christ's teachings, he will answer, "My interpretation of Christ's teaching is the true one, for it is in agreement with the voice of conscience, which you will hear speaking within you if you listen." In the first text the gospel says, "Be not angry with thy brother;" the later texts say, "Be not angry with thy brother without just cause." The whole of Tolstoy's doctrine of the non-resistance of evil depends on the omission of the words "without just cause," and when Mr. Stead asked him, "If you saw a drunken man kicking a child to death, should you use force to prevent him?" Tolstoy admitted that this was an exceptional case. A little while after he perceived that to admit an exception invalidated his doctrine, and he wrote to Mr. Stead saying that he was wrong, that not even in the case of a drunkard kicking a child to death should you resist evil. But every man's instinctive sense is opposed to this doctrine, and only for selfish reasons would a man withhold his hands from the drunkard.



A naked mountain lake reflecting a few birchen trees and morose, wind-driven clouds is, I think, a true picture of Tolstoy's mind, a mind from which all beautiful and sensuous images have been banished. His mind has become like a mountain waste where nothing flourishes except theory,—theories as harsh as the pines and birches that grow in the waste,—an awful place, haunted by many spirits, and if he were asked the name of the spirits he would answer, "Their name is Legion." Our concern is with the principal demon, that of theory. Only He could have forced Tolstoy to represent Napoleon as a nonentity, whose personality counted for nothing in his campaigns; only He could have forced him to write a book to prove that if a woman leave her husband she will end by committing suicide; only He could have induced Tolstoy to argue that a man should not take pleasure in his wife's beauty; only He could have driven the author of "War and Peace" over the abyss that Dickens's "Christmas Carols" are the greatest literature. Such inhuman beliefs as these, beliefs that no man ever held, Tolstoy asks us to accept as his faith, and not only is he anxious to convince us that he believes, but he would have us believe that we should take no pleasure in our wives, and should, like him, believe Dickens's "Christmas Carols" to be the greatest literature. He is moved by a feverish desire of what he calls truth, and every two or three years we become aware of a gaunt figure suddenly gesticulating from the Steppes. And so it is the writer who desires the truth more

than any other, and who seeks it more anxiously, should have written so much untruth, and should have practised so little of what he preached, for Tolstoy is as untruthful in his life as he is in his works. He has said that a man should take no pleasure in his wife's beauty, but his own marriage was a love marriage and he is the father of many children. He has said that a man, even if he have stripped himself of everything except one blanket, should share it with a leper if the leper ask him for it, and he is the owner of large properties. The story runs that he once intended to divide his property among his peasants, but that his wife intervened. We would have preferred Tolstoy to say, with Tartuffe, "I preach the truth, but cannot follow it," for when we hear that he lives in a hut communicating by folding-doors with his wife's apartment we begin to think that this great man is in many ways a great goose. We begin to compare him, and to his disadvantage, with the mad King of Bavaria, without whose folly Wagner's genius would have come to naught during his lifetime.



The composition of "The Ring" is not more marvellous than that of "War and Peace." But "The Ring" is more beautiful. If Wagner had painted, he would have painted like Veronese or Tintoretto, but if Tolstoy had painted, he would have painted like Kaulbach; or perhaps he would have preferred a pencil to a brush, a chalk pencil wherewith he would have scratched cartoons as moral as Kaulbach and as realistic as Raphaelli, without quality, the beautiful surface that great painters always have, a surface reminding us more of cream than oil-cloth; to explain myself I have only to compare Tolstoy's writings to Sir John Millais's later pictures; the intention of both seem to have been to transfer unfiltered nature on to paper and canvas. The presence or absence of quality is detected at once in painting and music, not so quickly in a book; it is long after reading a book that we find out if it had quality or hadn't. Our memories of Turgenieff and Pater are as delicate and illusive as moon-lit distances. But of "War and Peace" we remember nothing; it is interesting and captivating as life. As Mr. Howells put it, "It is not like life, it is life," and like life it is accessible to all—the cookmaid, the artist, and the philosopher read "War and Peace" with the same interest. "War and Peace" is a delightful winter companion, an admirable winter amusement for the leisured classes, and to have provided a winter amusement for the leisured classes is a curious fate for one who has set out to redeem the world from the evil of leisure. But Tolstoy's fate is not unlike the fate of his own characters, for every character in "War and Peace" went forth determined to do something, and they all did something, but no one did what he set out to do. We should beware of what we write in a book, for what we write will happen to us.

THE COAT AT THE FURRIER'S

A STORY IN LETTERS BY LUDWIG FULDA

Translated by Mrs. A. L. Wister



PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO DOCTOR GUSTAV STRAUCH.

BERLIN, November 20.

MY DEAR GUSTAV: I have something to tell you to-day which will certainly surprise you extremely. I have parted from my wife, or, to speak more correctly, we have parted from each other. By common agreement it is a perfectly friendly separation. My wife has gone to her family at Freiburg and will probably make it her permanent home. I remain for the time in our old house; perhaps I may look for a smaller one in the spring, perhaps not. I could hardly find anywhere else such a quiet study as this of mine, and the thought of my large library makes me dread the idea of moving.

Of course, you will want to know what has happened. Nothing, I assure you. The world will naturally invent all sorts of possible and impossible reasons why two people, who married for love, and have for eleven years lived together apparently happily, should part thus. Yes, this world, that thinks itself so wise, and that is in reality so idiotic, will doubtless suppose that there is a mystery here, and will find its solution in some one of the coarse suppositions which it has on hand ready for any emergency, not dreaming that life, with its inexhaustible possibilities, never repeats itself, and that one and the same combination of circumstances may wear various aspects, according to the character of those concerned. I need not say all this to you, my dear Gustav. You will easily understand how two delicately organized beings can no longer endure the outward semblance of marriage after they have, by a thousand fruitless efforts, convinced themselves of the impossibility of any agreement upon questions of the first importance.

My wife and I are by nature thoroughly antagonistic. There is an impassable abyss between her view of life and its duties and mine. In the early years of our marriage I hoped to be able to guide her, and gradually to bring her nearer to me; she seemed so impressionable, so docile, she took such an eager interest in my work, my plans, and

she was so ready to be taught by me. But after our boy's death a great change came over her. Grief at his loss, from which neither of us can ever entirely recover, matured her, and made her much more independent. A tendency, never displayed before, to brood, to analyze, took the upper hand in her mind, and lent intense persistence to views and ideas, partly inborn, partly acquired, which my influence had hitherto weakened, but never uprooted. She enveloped herself in a net of mystic ideas, of fantastically sentimental speculation, and insistently, even obstinately, demanded acknowledgment and respect for her point of view, rejecting passionately my calm, scientific opinions. She lost all interest in the studies of my profession, regarding my labors with unexpressed but evident dislike, as though they were but troops from a hostile camp.

At last, in the entire range of nature and of human experience there was scarcely a subject upon which we agreed. We never, indeed, absolutely quarrelled, but the more we tried to avoid doing so the more profound was our disagreement. We were distinctly conscious of merely being together, without any real union. This consciousness increased; it distressed, it finally tortured us, thrusting all other sensations into the background. Had our previous love for each other been less, we might have borne with each other more easily, and could, perhaps, have endured our strained relations for years longer. But our conception of the marriage tie is too exalted, our belief in our dignity as human beings too real, to admit of any frivolous intrusion upon such sacred ground. And so, about a week ago, the decisive word was spoken, as naturally, as much as a matter of course, as it is for an overripe fruit to drop from the bough. I hardly know whether she or I spoke first. A common desire for freedom took possession of each at the same time, and the fact that in the course of many years this was the first important subject which we could discuss harmoniously lent an air of beneficent reconciliation, which had long been painfully lacking with us, to what was otherwise a most distasteful matter.

Our separation accordingly took place yesterday after a most dignified fashion. There was not a word of accusation, not a discord. Each felt the necessity, and also the importance, of the step we were taking. Remembering the early period of our marriage, and all the years passed together since, we could hardly refrain from some expression of tenderness. And I confess to you that my wife never inspired me with more genuine respect than when, at such a moment, all pettiness seemed to have fallen away from her, and the original greatness of her nature was clearly manifest. It was her bearing—what she said, and what she did not say—that deprived the entire scene of any approach to the commonplace, investing it with the solemnity of a consecration. Deeply moved, with difficulty restraining our tears, we shook hands in

token of farewell. And thus we can, at least, look back upon the dissolution of our marriage with unalloyed satisfaction.

All business arrangements had, with her consent, been made beforehand through a lawyer. For there is to be no correspondence between us: it would but open old wounds and reveal fresh antagonism, robbing us of the strength necessary to meet the requirements of our divided lives.

We must begin all over again, both she and I. To do this there must be mental as well as material freedom from the past.

I already breathe more easily. The Rubicon is crossed. I think you may congratulate me.

PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO DOCTOR GUSTAV STRAUCH.

BERLIN, December 12.

MY DEAR GUSTAV: Forgive me for delaying until to-day the acknowledgment of your reply to my last letter—a reply full of delicate comprehension, of cordial sympathy. I have not been in a condition to write before; even now it costs me an effort. You give me your unqualified approval of a step which you deem the greatest possible aid to my comfort and to my mental development, but you hardly take into consideration what it means—this separation from a being with whom one has lived day and night for eleven years. I myself have come only gradually during these last miserable weeks to a full consciousness of its significance. Habit is a tremendous force, especially for men who, like yourself and myself, dwell in a world of the intellect, and know that it must rest upon a solid material foundation. For how can we maintain our outlook from the roof of our lofty tower if we are uncertain as to its base? Of course, such considerations vanish in view of the weighty reasons which determined my wife and myself to live apart. I am still firmly convinced that such a course is for the interest of each. But in this strange world of ours no calculation can be so close as not to leave a remainder.

There is always something disagreeable, confusing, in a transition state; in my case it has been positive torture. From morning until night I am occupied with petty matters of which I never dreamed in my bachelor days—matters which I am ashamed to mention to you, they are so ridiculously insignificant, and yet to a most disproportionate degree they deprive me of time, thought, and serenity; and I really cannot tell by what method to rid myself of these annoyances, of which my wife's presence relieved me. The servants! Now that the "cat's away" they think they can do as they please. And you can have no idea of the myriad of annoyances besides that daily beset my path. For example, we have had freezing weather for a couple of days, and I need my fur coat. I cannot find it. With the chamber-

maid's help I turned the entire house inside out, when it suddenly occurred to the girl that her mistress had sent it for safe-keeping to the furrier's. But to what furrier? No one knows, and consequently I have been to a dozen in vain.

If only I had not agreed with my wife that we must not write to each other! Then I could simply have asked her. Yet it is better as it is. No admixture of sordid care should sound a discordant note in the harmony of our farewell; no farce should follow a solemn drama. She might think that I repent, that I can less easily do without her than can she without me, that I seize the first pretext to renew our former relations. Never!

To-day it is six degrees below freezing.

PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO FRAU EMMA WIEGAND.

BERLIN, December 14.

DEAR EMMA: It will astonish you to receive a communication from me in spite of our common agreement. Do not be afraid that I mean to open a correspondence with you. Our relations with each other have been ended in the most dignified manner, and there will assuredly be no attempt on my part to open a door so closed. There is a very small matter in question which you alone can settle. What is the name of the furrier to whom you sent my fur coat for safe-keeping last spring? Awaiting a speedy reply, I thank you in advance.

MAX.

FRAU EMMA WIEGAND TO PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND.

FREIBURG, December 15.

DEAR MAX: The furrier's name is Palaschki, and he lives in Chambers Street. I cannot understand Lina's forgetfulness. She carried the coat to him herself.

EMMA.

PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO FRAU EMMA WIEGAND.

BERLIN, December 17.

DEAR EMMA: Once more, but for the last time, I must trouble you. Herr Palaschki declares that he cannot give up the coat without possession of the receipt which he gave for it. He adheres strictly to this rule, since several disagreeable complications have arisen from neglect of it. I have spent this entire morning in a vain search for the receipt, and, of course, Lina knows nothing about it. I reproached her for this in the gentlest manner, and she instantly became insolent. She leaves the house to-morrow. I prefer to pay her her wages in advance and to add Christmas money rather than have such a worthless, impertinent woman beneath my roof.

Be so good, then, as to tell me where the receipt is. I have already taken a violent cold for lack of the coat. Hoping that you are well, and that you are happy with your family,

MAX.

FRAU EMMA WIEGAND TO PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND.

FREIBURG, December 19.

DEAR MAX: The receipt is either in the little bureau in the dressing-room, the third or fourth drawer from the top, or in the right- or left-hand drawer of my writing-desk. I could find it in a minute if I were there.

Lina has grave faults, I know, but she really is one of the best of her class, and now, just before Christmas, you will find it hard to replace her. I doubt your finding anyone better. You might have patience with her for at least a few weeks longer. But that is now no affair of mine.

I trust you have recovered from your cold. I am very well.

EMMA.

PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO FRAU EMMA WIEGAND.

BERLIN, December 21.

DEAR EMMA: The receipt is not there—neither in the bureau nor the writing-desk. Perhaps it dropped out and was thrown away in the confusion of your packing. That is the only explanation I can think of.

To-morrow or the day after I will go once more to Herr Palaschki and try to coax my property from him by all sorts of promises of indemnity in case of a mistake. To-day I must stay in the house, for, in addition to my cold, I now have a severe nervous attack.

Yesterday I had a most annoying scene with the cook.

I accidentally discovered that since your departure she has been steadily pilfering articles of food. When I very mildly accused her of so doing, she turned the tables upon me, and declared in the most brutal and vulgar way that I understood nothing of housekeeping, and that she had remained here for extremely low wages solely out of pity for you, and that she should leave the house upon the spot. I replied gently, but firmly, that it was her duty to remain in her place until the end of her month. She then began to bawl and to gesticulate, and even had the insolence to maintain that you had found it impossible to live with me. At this I lost my self-control, I was furious, and—how I came to do so I cannot tell—but I must have used the expression "low creature." Unfortunately, I have no experience of such hags.

When I rang for supper a couple of hours afterwards I discovered that she had departed, "bag and baggage," leaving on the kitchen table for me a curiously spelled billet-doux wherein she threatened if I mo-

lest her at all, and did not give her a good written "character," to have me up before a magistrate for calling her a "low creature."

Now I am without servants. The wife of the concierge for an exorbitant fee blacks my shoes and brings me wretched meals from the restaurant, and, as you justly remark, there is no hope of my engaging a decent servant before Christmas or New Year. I have already sent to a dozen employment bureaus, and I shall go to them myself as soon as my health will permit.

This has grown to be a long letter, dear Emma. Out of the fulness of the heart the pen scribbles on.

Moreover, I have a strong suspicion that that worthless cook has carried off my gold sleeve-buttons, the ones my uncle left me in his will; of course, I have no proof of this; or perhaps you may have some idea of where they are. If you have, I should be grateful if you would drop me a line.

Farewell, dear Emma, and pray be more comfortable than I am.

MAX.

FRAU EMMA WIEGAND TO PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND.

Freiburg, December 23.

DEAR MAX: I read with sincere sympathy your account of the petty annoyances to which you have been subjected. The cook has often been as impudent to me as she was to you, but I quietly ignored it because she was an excellent cook. It is only poor cooks who treat us with deference. With their class you can always estimate the excellence of their cooking by the insolence of their behavior.

Now, at least, you see what I had to contend with, year out, year in, and you can understand that even in this domain problems arise which no science of natural philosophy enables one to solve.

I am not in a position at this distance to advise you. As you so perfectly expressed it in your first letter, I too would fain, after our dignified separation, hold myself aloof from all sordid considerations.

As for the receipt and the sleeve-buttons, I wager that I could find them in five minutes. You surely remember how often you rummaged long in vain for some lost article, which I found as soon as I began to look for it. Men can, and do, from time to time, discover some grand truth, but never an old button.

Since we are corresponding,—by your desire,—I too have a small request to make. I forgot to ask you before my departure to give back to me the letters you wrote me while we were engaged, and which I asked you to keep for me in your iron safe. They belong to me, and I should like to have them in my possession as memorials of a happy time. Be kind enough to send them to me.

I wish you a merry Christmas.

EMMA.

PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO FRAU EMMA WIEGAND.

BERLIN, December 25.

MY DEAR EMMA: Your wish with regard to a merry Christmas has not been fulfilled. Never in all my life have I passed so forlorn and cheerless a Christmas Eve.

You can understand the reluctance I felt to accepting the invitations of our friends—to being a mere spectator of family felicity. So I remained at home—if where I am can be called a home. I was quite alone in the house, for, in spite of my desperate exertions, not a servant is to be had before the first of January, and yesterday there was not even a substitute. The wife of the concierge had put my meagre supper upon my table early in the afternoon, that she might devote herself to her children for the rest of the day with no thought of me. A flickering petroleum lamp took the place of the Christmas-tree which you have arranged so charmingly and tastefully every year, and there were none of those pleasant little surprises by which you forestalled my wishes almost before I was conscious of them myself. On the table there was only my old fur coat, which the furrier, moved thereto either by my continued entreaties or by the influence of the holy-tide, had sent home in the forenoon.

The room was bitter cold, for the fire had gone out and all my science had failed to show me how to rekindle it. I put on my fur coat, sat down beside the lamp, and read the letters written to you before our marriage; I had taken them from the safe to send to you to-day.

I cannot describe to you, dear Emma, the impression they produced upon me. I cried like a child, not only because of the sad ending of a union that promised so much, but also over the change that has been wrought in me. The letters contain much that is crude, much that does not now accord with my views, but what a fine, fresh, warm-hearted fellow I was then! How I loved you! How happy I was! And how frankly and innocently I revelled in my happiness! Yes, that was the gist of it all—that youthful freedom from all foreboding, that mental vitality, the wealth of which fairly overran everything about it like a vine in spring. Hitherto I have thought that you have been the only one slowly to change; now I know that I am no longer the same; and God knows, when I compare that Max with this one, there is no hesitation as to which to prefer.

During the sleepless night which followed I have tried hard to transform myself to the former Max, and grave doubts have arisen in my mind as to whether the difference in our views and opinions were really as great as we thought it—whether there were not much of neutral ground where we might have made, and continued to make, common cause.

Reflect, dear Emma, and see whether you are not conscious too of some such inward voice. What is done cannot be undone, but nothing could comfort me more in my present miserable condition than to have you admit this, for your departure has left a void in my home and in my life which I can never, never fill. Your most unhappy

MAX.

FRAU EMMA WIEGAND TO PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND.

FREIBURG, December 27.

DEAR MAX: While you asked me about receipts and buttons I was quite ready to reply to you; I must refuse to answer the questions you put to me in your last letter. For do you really believe, old pedant that you are, that I could have left your home, which was also mine, just because our views and sentiments did not accord? If you do, you are terribly mistaken. I left you because I saw more and more clearly that you no longer loved me. Yes, I had come to be a burden to you; you wanted to be rid of me—so much was plain. If when we bade each other good-by you had said one tender word, I should, perhaps, still have stayed. But you maintained your seat, as ever, upon your high horse of "views of life," from which, however, you have now had an ignominious tumble because you have no servants. Oh, I loved you faithfully, but you had no eyes to see it. I did not let the fire go out upon your hearth; it was not my fault if the home were not warm!

Who knows that you would ever have noticed the "void" left by my departure if you had not missed your fur coat? That was the reason for your opening a correspondence with me; it seems to me fitting that it should be closed, now that you have fortunately recovered the garment. I, at least, have nothing more to say. Farewell forever.

EMMA.

PROFESSOR MAX WIEGAND TO DOCTOR GUSTAV STRAUCH.

BERLIN, January 8.

DEAR GUSTAV: Again I have a surprising piece of news to communicate. My wife came back to me yesterday. She yielded to my fervent and urgent entreaties. I thought I could not live with her; I find I cannot live without her; and she tells me that she too was very unhappy while we were apart. But she would never have confessed as much to me then, for she is the stronger of the two. I cannot explain the miracle, but we love each other more truly than ever. We are having a second honeymoon. The important problems of existence have separated us; can it be that its trifles have reunited us? Or may it not be that in the pocket of an old fur coat a withered heart was discovered?

The structure of my View of Life is tottering to its fall, dear Gustav. I must rebuild it.

THE REWARD OF VIRTUE

By Guy Wetmore Carryl

Author of "Zut, and Other Parisians"



FROM the square eastern window of the Holliston Hunt Club the eye strayed pleasantly out over swells and dips of land to where, two miles distant, lay the sea, a sheet of crinkling blue under the noonday sun. The country between, for the most part a succession of residences in the centre of scrupulously kept grounds and gardens, was broken here and there by groups of trees, among which the white trunks of silver birches stood conspicuously out. In summer but little of all this was visible through the elms and maples which immediately surrounded the club-house, but now, in the cold, flinty light of late December, every smallest detail was perceptible, as clearly and cleanly presented to the eye as the minutiae of a Meissonier interior. The landscape was a commingling of perfectly harmonizing drabs and browns, and against this background the big country-houses, with their colonial porticos or fawn-colored stucco, stood in prominent relief. Just now all these were occupied, for Christmas week at the Holliston Hunt Club had come to be an institution, and for these eight days the countryside stirred into feverish activity. House parties were everywhere, and for five miles around the club Holliston County was alive with girls in short skirts, men in riding togs, trim little cobs spanking along in front of Meadowbrook carts, and hysterical terriers of half a dozen breeds describing mad circles on the brown lawns. Inside the club-house there was a smell of holly, and box, and wood-smoke, and fur, and the leather of boots and puttee leggings, a gay chatter of voices, and a pleasant succession of glowing faces and bright, clear eyes. It was all very jolly and very smart, an uninterrupted crescendo of luncheons, and teas, and dinners, and dances, and the manifold delights of out-of-doors, until the New Year's ball: after which it was as if someone had taken the snuffers to Holliston County until well along in May.

Jimmy Barringer had arrived late the preceding evening, had slept the somewhat inadequate sleep of the feverishly expectant, had breakfasted with an impaired appetite, and, three minutes later, had received a facer at the hands of Beverly Winthrop, the walking bureau of information and social register of Holliston County.

"You've heard that the Kittredges are back?" inquired this gentleman in the course of much else that was immaterial.

"Yes," answered Jimmy, solicitously regarding his pet nail, "but I haven't seen them. I was in Cuba when they landed, and they came straight through from New York to open the house. Let's see—they must have been gone almost a year?"

"Just about," agreed Winthrop, narrowing his eyes. "It took them some time, but they caught it at last."

"Caught it—caught what?" demanded Jimmy, with a vague impression of whooping-cough or measles.

"Why, the title. Don't tell me you didn't know that was what they went over after! Why, man, they've been scrabbling round the fashionable resorts of Europe like squirrels in a wheel for a twelve-month, and casting the net in every crowd where they saw the gleam of a coronet. But the net was too weak to hold the big fish, and the little ones all slipped through. It took them some time to find something of medium size, but at last they landed it, and have brought it home in triumph. I met it there at luncheon yesterday, and Esther was looking as happy as if she were going to marry a real, live man, instead of Comte Henri de Mans de Chambour—and some other 'de's' which I don't seem to remember."

Winthrop paused to light a cigarette, and Jimmy stole a glance at him. He was taking his face remarkably well, was Jimmy.

"I hadn't heard of the engagement," he said.

"Oh, it's not actually announced," said Winthrop. "They are saving it for the New Year's ball, I imagine—but the evidence is all in and quite conclusive. You ought to see him, Jimmy!"

Jimmy let his desire for details be felt.

"All pink and pale yellow," announced Winthrop, plunging into sketchy description with the facility which was his forte, "pale yellow hair, pompadour; pale yellow mustache, just visible to the naked eye, and also heavenward pointing; pale yellow eyes; pink cheeks, and baby-pink conversation. And perfumed in layers, my dear, good sir,—like a *pousse café*,—lilac for the hair, orris for the face, violet for the mustache, and patchouli for the handkerchief! I'm sure I can't conceive what Esther Kittredge can see in such an article as that. Title, of course—yes! But no table of contents, my dear, good sir, none whatever!"

Jimmy formulated an elaborate yawn.

"I'm off for a gallop," he said, as if this were a disagreeable duty. "I may see de Whatshisname this afternoon. I suppose I ought to call on the Kittredges."

He left Mr. Beverly Winthrop with his legs spread far apart before the hall fire and his eyes still narrowed.

"‘They must have been gone nearly a year,’ eh?" said that omniscient individual to himself. "Just as if you hadn't been marking the days off on your calendar, my Jimmy! And ‘I suppose I ought to call on the Kittredges.’ Jimmy, Jimmy—what a piece of plate-glass it is, to be sure! Poor old Jimmy!"

Yet to the very end Jimmy had continued to take it remarkably well. He rode slowly down the drive in full view of the club windows, forcing his tidy little mare into a mincing gait by a simultaneous hint of curb and spur. It was not the sort of thing a disappointed and preoccupied man would be apt to think of, and Beverly Winthrop, watching him from the window, gave him due credit for artifice.

But, once out upon the unfrequented Mill Bridge road, the little mare was given her head in a fashion calculated to upset her entire system of equine logic, and for three miles and more was kept on a pounding run. As good fortune would have it, the day was comparatively soft, for James Barringer was in no mood to consider the feet of his mount.

There are ways and ways of expressing emotion. In another man than Jimmy that three-mile run would have been profanity, but it was a distinct improvement upon the latter in that it effectively restored his equanimity and his appetite. The Jimmy Barringer who strode up the Kittredges' driveway that afternoon at three was the same placid and twinkling-eyed Jimmy to whom Esther Kittredge had said good-by on the Cunard pier twelve months before.

Their meeting was the meeting of friends who have passed the stage when constant companionship is essential to complete understanding. For a year there had been no direct communication between them. It had been her wish, and was, as such, bound to be respected.

"I want time to think it over," she had said to Jimmy, "time to think what is best. I know you so well, and I see you so often, that I've lost my sense of perspective, so far as you are concerned." And so it had been.

Now he had his reward in the feeling that they had lost nothing by the experiment of this covenanted silence. If he were the same Jimmy, she was, assuredly, the same Esther—lithe, straight, and slender, with clear, keen, gray eyes, and a memorable smile, and a hand-grip firm and confident, like a man's. Behind her, Comte Henri de Cr  cy de Mans de Chambour twirled his small mustache uneasily as he watched them, awaiting the moment of introduction. When it came he executed a bow that was an heirloom in the de Chambour family, dating from the reign of the Sun King, and said:

"En-shanted, Meest' Barrinjaire."

Jimmy surveyed him quizzically. The type was new to him.

The Comte de Chambour looked as if he belonged, with a gilt bow

and arrows, on a valentine. He was very small and abnormally chubby, and had apparently been melted into his clothes; when he moved, it was in the manner of one practising a miniature waltz; and with his plump hands he gave his hair and apparel occasional surreptitious pats—the pats of a solicitous mother dispatching an only child to dancing-school. Had they met under any but these circumstances Jimmy would have regarded him with the large-minded tolerance of a mastiff for a toy terrier, but there was a significance to his presence here which made him formidable. He was the guest of the Kittredges, and the Kittredges—particularly the maternal Kittredge—did not have guests except for a purpose.

Suddenly Jimmy Barringer was conscious of a profound despondency. For four years he had fought against heavy odds, of which Mrs. Kittredge was first and foremost, for the one thing worth having in the world as he saw it. For four years he had contrived to hold his own. Other men had come into the race, for a time had seemed to outstrip him, but in the end had fallen behind. But these had been men approximately of like calibre with himself, whom he could understand, and deal with, and defeat in an unassuming but none the less effective fashion of his own. He had even managed to outmanœuvre Mrs. Kittredge, so long as she met him fairly on familiar ground and with familiar weapons.

This, however, was something new. The Comte de Chambour, all pink and pale yellow, with his cherubic countenance and his crafty little eyes, and, worst of all, his air of proprietorship in Esther's presence, was as incomprehensible as a being from another planet. Why was he there? What had he to gain? What might he not have gained already? Jimmy thought he knew the answer to all three questions, and when their eyes met his said unpleasantnesses to the eyes of the Comte de Chambour.

As was but natural, the conversation was limited to commonplace conventionalities. Esther gave an epitome of the family's travels, as fragmentary in relation to the whole as a short-hand transcription of solid print, while Jimmy devoured her with his eyes, and the Comte nodded complacently, throwing in an occasional remark with an infuriatingly intimate little "*ma chère*" on the end, which made his rival rage inwardly. What Jimmy found most ominous about this was the manner in which the trifling endearment passed as a matter-of-course. Little by little his fingers began to itch for the Frenchman's plump, clean-shaven throat!

An hour stumbled by in this fashion, and then the trio was reënforced by the entrance of Mrs. Kittredge with an open telegram in her hand and the expression of an expiring martyr on her face. She was a woman whose plans invariably went wrong, and who was wont to

fall upon the bosoms of her friends with the stereotyped lament, "Oh, my dear, what *do* you suppose has happened?" Also, she was objectionable to the Comte de Chambour for the reason that her speech was of the headlong, cross-country variety which leaves the luckless novice in English floundering in the first ditch.

"How are you, Jimmy?" she began, as if she had last seen him that morning, instead of a year before. "Oh Esther, my dear, what *do* you suppose has happened? Here's a despatch from Godfrey to say that he has gone down to a shooting-box on the Cape with some friends for Christmas. Is there anything as irresponsible as a sophomore? And who *can* we get to do Santa Claus for the children? Your father is much too stout for the costume, and, of course, we couldn't very well ask——"

Her eyes dwelt for a moment on the person of the Comte de Chambour.

"No, of course we couldn't," she continued at breakneck speed. "Oh, I'm *so* disappointed! The children would have been so surprised and excited—and now they'll just go on thinking there isn't any such thing—just when we might have convinced them—I call it *too* annoying of Godfrey—though, of course, he didn't know—I ought to have written him—and now it's too late to do anything—oh, *dear!*"

"But, mother," exclaimed Esther, metaphorically lassoing her voluble parent in full career, "here's Jimmy."

"Oh, *Jimmy!*" cried Mrs. Kittredge in the tone of a shipwrecked mariner hailing a sail.

The situation was familiar to Jimmy Barringer. So long as he could remember it had been his task to stop leaks in Mrs. Kittredge's foundering plans. Fifty per cent. of the dinners he had eaten at her table had been intended originally for some other man who had "given out at the last moment." Whenever shipwreck seemed inevitable, Mrs. Kittredge would hastily rig Jimmy as a jury-mast, and so sail triumphantly into port. He had a faint mental picture of the eligible whom she should pick out for Esther "giving out at the last moment" and he, James Barringer, being summoned from a rear pew to take the delinquent's place at the altar rail. But that was the dream which seemed too good to be true: the other duties forced upon him in his capacity of aide-de-camp to Mrs. Kittredge were the reality which was much too true to be good. In brief, in the eyes of Jimmy Barringer, Mrs. Kittredge was something to get used to, while Jimmy, in the eyes of Mrs. Kittredge, had always been something to be used. Thus far he had been mildly expectant of some intangible reward of virtue, having never experienced the virtue of tangible reward.

The present difficulty was soon explained. Mrs. Kittredge pre-empted Jimmy, and, on the library divan, poured forth the details of

her dilemma. Clement, aged ten, had been egregiously corrupted by the contaminating influences of boarding-school into the heresy that Santa Claus was a delusion and a snare, and had passed on this fruit of the Tree of Knowledge to Harold, aged seven. The emergency was instant. Had Mrs. Kittredge been the British government, she would have assembled the Channel Fleet. As it was, she had ordered the conventional habiliments of the time-honored saint from a costumer in town, and at a given moment, that very evening, Clement and Harold were to have been given a glimpse of Saint Nicholas in the act of putting the finishing touches to the Christmas-tree upon which her husband, Esther, the Comte, and herself had lavished the whole of the preceding evening. Godfrey, her eldest son, was to have impersonated Santa Claus, and the effect would have been to preserve the faith of the little boys for at least one more Christmas—but now!—and Mr. Kittredge was far too stout for the costume—and one couldn't very well ask the Comte—and, besides, he wouldn't understand—and if Jimmy could—and if Jimmy would—and if Jimmy should——

Mrs. Kittredge folded her hands and looked at him out of eyes that had once been inspiring—and still were, so far as Jimmy was concerned, because Esther had inherited them!

So it was that, three hours later, James Barringer, Esq., crept cautiously through the window which opened from the Kittredges' south piazza into the yellow drawing-room, and found himself in the deepening dusk in the presence of an incompletely decorated Christmas-tree, reared luxuriantly from floor to ceiling. He had dressed in the study, and was now attired in a fur cap, jacket, and knee-breeches, and boots spangled with imitation snow. His cheerful countenance was obscured by blue glasses and a flowing cotton beard. On his shoulders he bore a pack stuffed with excelsior and with a few delusive toys gaping from its mouth. He was consumedly uncomfortable, and had written himself down an ass, feeling, and not unreasonably, that this time Mrs. Kittredge had carried things to extremes. But, then, it was for Esther!—and oftentimes the extremes are as justifiable as the means, to an end.

Meanwhile Comte Henri de Crécy de Mans de Chambour had prepared to play his trump card. There was a certain yellow diamond, which had led the life of a tennis-ball, with the Comte on one side of the net and the pawnbrokers on the other. For the moment this was in the former's hands. Also, it had been mounted in a ring of sixteen-carat gold.

It was the delicate fancy of the Comte de Chambour to hang the box containing his ring upon the Christmas-tree, with a card bearing Miss Kittredge's name attached. He had already, with subtle tact, consulted Kittredge père and mère, and was under the delusion, born

of his national custom of procedure in affairs of the sort, that all thenceforward was to be smooth sailing. When it came to finishing the decoration of the tree that evening Miss Esther Kittredge would find the box, would be persuaded to open it, and——

"Oh, lala, lalala!" said the Comte de Chambour to himself, rubbing his fat hands, "but thou art a genius, my Henri—what?"

For the execution of this little stroke of diplomacy he selected a moment when the children were finishing their supper and the others assembled in the library over the evening papers. Unfortunately, he was unaware that another little comedy had already been prepared. It is known to be a matter of unconscionable difficulty to perform two comedies on the same stage at the same time.

In the gloom Jimmy took his stand near the tree to await the prearranged entrance of Esther and her little brothers. He had barely assumed this position when the door was softly opened, and Comte Henri de Crécy de Mans de Chambour stole noiselessly into the room. For a moment the little Frenchman hesitated, and then his chubby fingers touched an electric button, which flooded the room with light. The step from the sublime to the ridiculous had been irretrievably taken!

The impression produced upon the mind of the Comte by the grotesque apparition before him was as calamitous as it was immediate. He had never been conspicuous for physical prowess, even in a city and a society where this virtue is quoted at something below par, and the least formidable of marauders was calculated to have smitten him with a deathly qualm, while the figure which now confronted him was so strange, so ominous, so undreamt-of, that the sight of it turned his modicum of courage to the veriest pulp. To the enraptured eyes of James Barringer was thus presented the felicitous spectacle of a man he loathed in the grip of a vacuous and ludicrously gasping fear, and his heart began to crow like a bantam under his jacket of imitation fur.

It was not within the design of Fate that a tableau so effective should lack an audience, for now the door of the yellow drawing-room opened once more, and, as had been preconcerted, Esther made her appearance, with Harold clinging to her right hand and Clement to her left. These two young gentlemen, whose faith in an unstable tradition the original comedy had been designed to preserve, were instantly converted from their heresy, and in a vociferous commingling of rapture and alarm went bounding nimbly back towards the library in quest of reinforcements. From a distance their voices pierced the air, shrill with ecstasy, as they called heaven and earth, and, in particular, their parents, to witness the prodigy they had but now beheld.

"It's him! It's him! It's *h-h-h-him!*"

This outcry, more soul-satisfying on the ground of volume than on that of grammar, was the one thing needed to complete the demoraliza-

tion of the Comte de Chambour. With a single backward glance, which showed him Miss Kittredge, standing motionless, with her hands clasped at her cheek, he hurled himself, with all the force of desperation, upon the furry bosom of the saint.

But he was not the first to find that target an unyielding one. For example, there had been four successive right tackles on the Harvard Varsity who had proved to their entire satisfaction why a certain gentleman went by the name of "Stonewall" Barringer at Yale. The Comte rebounded, fell, rose, charged again with the same result, and yet again, and finally brought up, dangling, like a discarded suit of clothes, in Jimmy's good right hand.

"Don't be an idiot, Mounseer," observed his captor, with supreme calm and the most atrocious imaginable accent, and forthwith dropped him to the floor.

The Comte looked up at Miss Kittredge.

"Ah, you laff?" he said feebly. "Yees, eet ees a deevairtin' meestek. You laff veez me—aha!"

"Not *with—at!*" replied Miss Kittredge through her tears. And the Comte, who, despite appearances, was no fool, knew himself for lost.

Beverly Winthrop, the omniscient, had been, as usual, quite right. The engagement of Miss Esther Kittredge was announced, as he had prophesied it would be, at the New Year's ball of the Holliston Hunt Club. But, curiously enough, the name of Comte Henri de Crécy de Mans de Chambour did not figure in the bill. Indeed, at the moment that nobleman was pacing the deck of La Touraine with two tickets of widely different size and appearance and thirty-one dollars as his total assets. The sum in question represented the result of subtracting the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique's valuation of a second cabin passage to Le Havre from Mr. Israel Simonstein's opinion of a yellow diamond.



TWO NURSES

BY AGNES LEE

I N the soul's chamber, reft and bare,
When the soul may not weep,
Comes stealing in the Nurse, Despair,
And drugs it off to sleep.

But in some watch, ere night be dead,
Another takes her place;
At dawn, above the soul's dim bed,
Hope bends her beaming face.

A REDWOOD SANTA CLAUS

By Jerome Case Bull



L

LITTLE REDWOOD LEWIS was red-headed,—and he knew it. There was nothing in all the world he knew better, unless it were the redwoods back of Boulder. His hair was as red as the heart of the great redwood in which he was born, and that was, as he said, “as red as anything.” It was no usual thing to be red-headed, either; he knew that too. So far as he was aware he was the only person in the world so marked. Even as a very small boy he thought about it, and when his brothers and sisters came, with hair as black as a charred stump, the color of his own head seemed more than ever a matter of wonder to him. Very naturally, he laid it all to the tree. The black-headed babies had not been born in the hollow redwood, as he had, but in the leanto of shakes his father had built on at the back, so, of course, it was hardly to be expected that they would be as he. He was proud of his hair. Did it not make him one with the red squirrels, with the red-headed woodpecker that lived above him? And that, indeed, was something to be proud of. But as he grew up and each day carried the lunch down the mountain to his father in the shingle-mill at Boulder he regretted his hair, or, at least, the emphasis of its color. For was it not Boulder that named him Redwood the very first time he had gone there? And he never forgot it nor forgave the tone in which it was given. Nor did the name ever leave him for another. Indeed, for one endowed mentally and physically as was Reddy there could have been no other. Certainly it was his by every known right; and certain it was that for many years Boulder would countenance no other red-headed person in the neighborhood.

The Lewis cabin is on the wooded side of Ben Lomond Mountain near the crest, and, though just off the trail which winds down into Boulder, one would hardly discover it, for the cabin itself is the hollow base of a giant redwood-tree and redwoods tower all about it.

That any man should have taken up his abode in a hollow tree in the heart of the forest was, of course, not without reason. Once this reason was a matter of no light suspicion,—something of a mystery,—nor was the suspicion or the mystery cleared when, later, a slender, sweet-faced woman appeared at the tree door and children came. But that was years before, when the trail over the mountain was first put

through and Lewis's queer home revealed—when Reddy was a very small baby. The tide of timber-cutting never reached the heights of Ben Lomond, and after the brief period of question attendant upon its discovery Lewis's cabin sank into its original solitude. Except for the few who passed over the trail now and then and stopped to look in at the door or chanced to hear there some soft note of a lullaby its very existence was forgotten. In Lewis himself, steady, hard-working, soft-voiced, pleasant-mannered, was little of the question or mystery of the past, though past and mystery there undoubtedly were.

The tree dwelling had but one distinguishing architectural feature—the leanto of shakes tucked on at the back as a second room. Its chief claim to individuality was its inhabitants, its personnel, and in this respect it was strong. Nor was Lewis star among these inhabitants, even with the glamour of his past, nor was the sweet-faced woman who appeared just as mysteriously, and who in time, after the children came, ceased just as mysteriously to be a part of the population. It was the children themselves that the passer-by looked for, the children ever playing in the clearing about their strange home, their gay laughter ringing far down the mountain side. Even Boulder, in some interrupted buzz of its saw, now and again heard their merry shouts, smiled, and wondered. Children alone ran things, or, that is, one child, Reddy, ran them.

II.

ON a particular morning in December Reddy was very busy in the cañon back of his cabin, chopping and trimming a redwood sucker. He was no novice at most kinds of work in the redwoods. Cutting chaparral or fighting fires, he had proven himself equally efficient. But the job in hand puzzled him. It was a job entirely new to him, a job in which, as the work progressed, he found himself, for the first time in his life, utterly dissatisfied with results. He was making a Christmas-tree. Only once had he ever seen a Christmas-tree. The year before, Minnie, the little daughter of Hennessee, the owner of the mill at Boulder, had taken him into her grand house—there were four whole rooms—and had shown him a wonderful sight. Of course, even in dreams he had no hope of making anything so superb as that. He had noted, though, that the tree itself was only a common redwood sucker, and she had told him that the tree was the first thing necessary. Thereupon he had promised himself that that part of Christmas, at least, he could and would have next year at his house.

But now that next year was here and Christmas to-morrow, and the tree chopped and stood up, he was not at all satisfied. There was something lacking. He could not tell just what it was, but he felt sure that just a common redwood wasn't, after all, exactly a Christmas-tree—anyway, not the Christmas-tree he had had in mind.

Such a soliloquy as this Lewis, the boy's father, overheard as he came up the cañon from his work at the mill and stopped to note the lad's labors.

"'Tain't any different from all the other suckers," Reddy broke out with emphasis. "What's the matter with it, Dad? I want it to be a Christmas-tree."

Dunc Lewis smiled; it was a sad, grave smile, but full of a sympathy that Reddy knew well, a love that meant as much as the father's reassuring words.

"It is a Christmas-tree, Reddy," he said. "It's a *fine* Christmas-tree. It's a regular *beaut*. Not another one on Ben Lomond like it; not one half so good; why, just stand back and take a good look at it." And Lewis drew the little fellow off to one side, gazing convincingly at the small sapling that, half stripped of its new green fir, stood propped up against a clump of manzanita.

The action and the words satisfied and Reddy beamed.

"I sha'n't put it up till the kids have gone to bed, though, Dad," he said. "They mustn't know. They'll be more surprised to see it all in the morning."

"What you got to put on it?"

"Oh, berries and things," the boy answered confidently. "I know where there's a lot of *red* ones the frost didn't get." Then, full of the thoughts of the Christmas he had been pondering about as he worked, he asked, "Do you suppose, Dad, there really is somebody who puts *real things* on Christmas-trees?"

Lewis did not answer.

"Minnie Hennessee said so when she showed me her tree last year. It was all full of silver and gold moss and red and green balls and presents. She said some man brought them. I don't just remember his name."

Lewis laughed to himself. "She was fooling you, Reddy," he said.

"No, she said *sure*."

"She was fooling you, though. I never heard of anybody doing things like that, not up here."

There was a moment of silence.

"Do you suppose he's a *real* man, Dad—if she *wasn't* fooling?"

"Perhaps, if she wasn't fooling."

"Gee! I'd like to see him once, wouldn't you, Dad? D'you suppose he comes up from Santa Cruz with the things?"

"Likely's not."

"On the stage?"

There was an emphasis on the "stage" that startled Lewis. He looked at the boy fixedly, a new light in his eyes.

"Did Minnie Hennessee say he came on the stage?" he asked slowly.

"She *said* he drove six tame bucks," came the answer.

There was a hesitancy in the boy's voice, as if he were afraid the statement might convince his father that Minnie Hennessee had indeed been fooling him. But Lewis did not notice it. He had forgotten the boy's existence. Wrapped in thought, he strode silently ahead. Even the children clamoring about him as he came into the clearing before their home failed to rouse him, and he ate his meal and departed in silence.

To Reddy this sudden abstraction of his father's was awful. Just now he wanted especially to talk to him about the tree, to settle its reality, to be assured again that it was all right, that it was a *real* Christmas-tree. But experience had taught him much, and silence was among the lessons.

There was a period of waiting until the time when the children should have gone to bed and he could bring his tree from the cañon below. Reddy thought of the berries that grew above the frosts and climbed the mountain for them. Great blotches of shining red, they stood out from the waxen green of their prickly leaves, tempting him higher and higher as better and better they seemed,—for only the best would do for his purpose,—until he found himself at the very top of Ben Lomond with the sun setting, golden, in the sea beyond.

Even with its troubling doubts the day had been one of great delight to him. What were troubling doubts compared to hopes such as his? He had believed his little friend's tale of the Christmas-tree and its presents for a whole year, and now he was not going to let a disappointment in the appearance of his own small redwood make him unhappy; no, nor his father's suggestion that Minnie was fooling him, either.

He got the evening meal for the children, whistling gayly, and bundled them off to their bunks in the leanto with the alacrity of a cross nurse that he might be off for his tree.

He had relied on his father's help in this task, but he waited in vain. Night came and settled over the mountain. Alone, he hurried away down the trail. With infinite labor he tugged his tree up the hill, back to the redwood room, and stood it firmly in the ground in the centre. He made sure that the children were all asleep, then lit a single candle and began operations. Here and there about his tree he tied bunches of the red berries he had gathered, here and there hung festoons of webby oak-moss. Over the top of Minnie Hennessee's tree had hovered a gold and white angel with gauzy wings. Reddy had trapped a brilliant road-runner days before for this very purpose. It was a good substitute; it was better; for his ornament was alive. Tied by one foot with a string fastened to a branch, the bird mounted

to the very top of the tree, and there, perched in solemn grandeur, eyed the work going on below.

At last it was finished, his part at least, ready for the team of bucks and—— Would they come? Would they come, as Minnie said they did, at midnight, loaded with presents, with everything he wanted, everything the kids wanted? Would they? Was she only fooling him, as his father had suggested? Was she? *Was she?* Surely *she* meant it. He *knew* she did—and his tree was ready.

He sat down and looked his work over and over; it was all right; "*He*" would do the rest. The candle was going out. The great heart of the giant tree opened up above him dark and empty; shadows of the little tree in the centre played over its sloping sides, bobbed and dodged in the flickering light, and disappeared in the blackness above as the candle sputtered and went out.

For a time he sat perfectly still in the darkness, wondering again about it all. Then, suddenly, he remembered his father. He was never away at night; something must have happened to keep him; he must go and see. He went to the opening in the tree and looked out. The clearing in front was flooded in moonlight, but on all sides lay the deep, silent black of great trees at night. Still, he was not afraid. And Boulder, to him, was no farther by night than by day.

III.

THE stage to Boulder was coming down the grade. Heaving and rocking on a grinding, scraping brake, with a clanging of harness chains ahead and no little profanity within, the old coach was making time, for it was Christmas Eve and Bill had dropped precious moments along the way in greetings. It was dark, so dark that Hennessee, the only passenger within, saw nothing anywhere save the half-imagined, half-shadowed trunks of giant redwoods filling the blackness about him and filing silently up the road as the stage rolled down.

At the foot of the grade the road turned out of the mountains and the darkness and crossed a level bit of country which lay clear and white in the moonlight. At the foot of the grade it was too that the stage came to a halt. With a final shriek of torture, the brake grappled the huge wheels, there was an extra jangling of chains, then a definite cessation of all motion and absolute stillness.

Hennessee gathered himself together and looked out—and so continued to look—exactly as the impulse of the moment directed. For the impulse of that especial moment was a business-like individual, very black and sinister from the mouth up, standing on the bank and ordering. Certain things about the man were unpleasantly assertive. His arm, held straight out before him, seemed of abnormal length

and pointed a ray of moonlight threateningly at Hennessee. The voice too, in word and tone, courted no parley, admitted of no delay—even advised dispatch in compliance with its owner's very politely suggested desires.

Bill, easily, slowly, as though a hold-up was an every-day affair, a very natural part of his business,—which, indeed, in years gone by it had been,—threw off the Wells Fargo box and the mail and awaited further orders.

"The parcels, if you please," said the voice.

A collection of small bundles tied together with a rope tumbled into the road.

It was to these parcels alone that the man on the bank gave his attention. He ordered the stage-driver to cut the rope and empty them into the road, then to read the addresses on the various packages. Of some half-dozen that bore the name of Hennessee he directed that a bundle should be made and thrown up to him on the bank. The Wells Fargo prize and the mail, to the utter confusion of the driver, he ordered back on the stage, and then very soberly, without the slightest suggestion of humor, he said, as he backed away into the thick chaparral and disappeared,—

"Charge these to Saint Nick."

It was over in a moment. The horses were still panting from their mad gallop down the grade. Bill shook himself and stared. Hennessee shook himself and swore roundly. Then he laughed aloud. Each looked at the other, at the empty sack in the road, at the bank of chaparral, at the road ahead in the moonlight, back at the dark hillside they had just descended, at each other again.

"That's the best I ever saw," said Hennessee. "Let's have a drink."

He offered his bottle to the driver, who, with a gurgle, crowned himself long and deep.

"What kind of stuff was that we got at Hickey's?" asked Hennessee, looking through his empty bottle at the moon.

But the driver did not answer that question.

"An old hand at the job," he said instead, motioning his head towards the chaparral.

"A good one, anyway," said Hennessee.

"Charge it to Saint Nick," chuckled the driver, half to himself.

"Cool, wasn't it?" said Hennessee. "Funny too, even if they were my things."

"Valuable?" asked the driver, concerned now with the loss.

"No-o, only some toys for the little ones to-morrow."

"Too bad," consoled Bill. "Have to tell them Santa Claus got held

up." And he chuckled again as he climbed up to his seat, gathered in his line, and released the brakes. "No doubt about *him*," he soliloquized, as the horses galloped away at the crack of the whip. "Doing Santa Claus himself to-night, I guess, and needed those particular things. Must have been a good one in his day. The nerve of him, though!"

IV.

BOULDER was on the eve of something, something rare, something good, which was equivalent to something almost preposterous at Boulder, something almost impossible, it seemed. Someone had made the startling announcement that it was Christmas Eve. The group of late loungers at the bar of the Cañon Hotel had received the news without a debate, even in wondering silence, which in itself was something, for the loungers at the Cañon debated all assertions. The very nature of the news may have been reason enough for this, but it is quite as probable that the source of information was the chief factor in its unquestioned acceptance. The source, on its face, was undeniably safe. A small boy had pushed his way into the group by the bar asking for "My Dad," and, finding gibes instead of news, had turned upon his tormentors with fierce denunciation in terms out of all proportion to his youth. He was half clad and was barefooted, but there was a business-like air about him which was fearless and bold, and Boulder knew him well. He met the jokes of the men without flinching and gave in return as good as was given. A roar of laughter greeted the boy's expressed views of the men's moral and mental worth, but a hush fell on the crowd when he shouted at them:

"Ching chong Chinamen! That's what youse all is. Youse ain't got sense enough to know it's Christmas Eve."

Christmas Eve! There at Boulder! And little Reddy the only one to remind them of it! They were dumb.

"Sure, ain't any of youse seen my Dad to-night?" Reddy asked again, and his voice was earnest and pleading. "Where's Bill?" he persisted. "Ain't the stage come yet?"

Alarm was creeping into his voice. Still the men said nothing. Their silence disarmed him. All his fearlessness of the moment before forsook him. After all, he was only a very little boy and afraid.

"Youse know something," he protested, "something about my Dad." He caught the hand of one of the men and looked up into his face. "What is it, Sim? What's happened?"

Sim was an especial friend of the boy and answered him honestly. "Your Dad ain't been here for a week, Reddy. Sure he ain't." And then, unable to stand before the boy's pleading look on the strength of his own word, Sim turned to his companions for support.

It was given seriously. "Honest, Reddy, he ain't," they said; "that's right, he ain't."

Though there was a certain satisfaction in their combined assurance of the absence of his father from Cañon society for at least a week, the fact helped Reddy little in his present search, and he turned away with tears welling in his eyes.

And now, faintly, from far away across the creek, came the sound of flying hoofs. The men listened. To them, brought suddenly back over the years to thoughts of Christmas, it might have been the patter of the hoofs of reindeer; but they knew it was Bill and the stage from Santa Cruz. The noise of the harness and brake and Bill's "Whoa, you," as he swept down on to the bridge announced him plainly enough, and in a moment his horses drew up panting in the glare of the Cañon lamps.

But one passenger got out—Hennessee, the owner of the mill. And a most unusual thing occurred. Hennessee, for whom most of them worked, asked them all in to have a drink. And when they were all set and stood, in the presence of their boss, more or less awkwardly over their glasses, he lifted his own high up above his head and said merrily,—

"Well, boys, here's joy and a merry Christmas to all of you tomorrow."

Out of their dumfounded surprise came only a murmur in reply. The row of empty glasses, drained to the dregs, was, perhaps, their best acknowledgment. Hennessee's own glass was the last to be emptied. As the men drank he glanced hastily down the line, searching for a face he knew was not there."

"Mighty funny thing, boys, just happened to Bill and me," he said, "down the road a bit."

The men were all attention.

"We got held up."

So astounding was this statement that its significance failed to penetrate at first and no one said a word.

"But it wouldn't have been so funny," he went on, "if it weren't for the way it was done and the person who did it."

A gleam of eager interest, if not intelligence, manifested itself along the bar, and the men gathered close about the speaker as he drew for them a graphic picture of the hold-up. In glowing colors he painted the lone highwayman, told of the strange order regarding the Wells Fargo box and the mail, and of the robber's apparent satisfaction in finding the worthless toys he was bringing home to his little girl.

"If Bill were not here to back me," he concluded, "I shouldn't have cared to say anything about it. You wouldn't have believed me. I can hardly believe it myself."

A breathless silence had prevailed. It was followed by a chorus of interrogations.

"Got any suspicions who it was?"

"Tall or short?"

"Any horse?"

"See which way he went?"

"Sure he was alone?"

But to only the first question did Hennessee pay any attention.

"Yes," he said very impressively, "I have a very strong suspicion who it was. So has Bill."

The men turned excitedly to the driver, and Bill, noting a twinkle in his late passenger's eye, caught its meaning and drawled:

"Well, I wouldn't like to accuse no one unjustly, but as near as I could judge, looking at him under difficulties and a mask, he seemed to me very much like—like"—the men leaned forward—"like some stray Santa Claus of the mountains who had run short of goods and just *had* to have them 'special things we was bringin' out.'"

There was a moment of doubt in the sincerity of this speech. Then a shout of laughter shook the room, and Hennessee's voice called them to fill up again for a health to the highwayman Santa Claus.

Great merriment prevailed, and everyone drank the toast—everyone save a small, red-headed boy, who stood unnoticed in the shadow of the bar, listening with all his ears, listening with all his might.

V.

"SANTA CLAUS run short of goods!"

The words said themselves over and over again to Reddy climbing the trail up the mountain. His heart sank. The real purpose of his night trip to Boulder, the whereabouts of his father, seemed lost in the blackness of this terrible fact: Santa Claus had run short of goods. Of all the story of the hold-up, every word of which he had heard with bated breath, this fact alone impressed him: Boulder would be left out. That he had failed to find any news of his father occurred to him, but he felt sure that by this time, since he was not at Boulder, he must surely be at the cabin. Now and again where the trail was clear in the moonlight he ran, and he whistled loudly where his way led through the blackness of the forest.

It was past midnight when he turned from the trail and bore away through the woods to his cabin. But he stopped suddenly as he came to the edge of the clearing. A bright track of light, bright even in the moonlight, stretched across the open space from the tree door to the woods. It seemed at first that the tree must be on fire; but there was no smoke, no sound of crackling wood, only a silent, beautiful light. He was afraid, and yet, as he stopped and gazed at it, he knew that it was not fear that stirred him. It was wonder, hope. Might it not be Santa Claus, after all?

Cautiously he stole to the opening in the tree and looked in. His little redwood, in a glory of beautiful Christmas things, burst upon him. With an exclamation of wonder and joy he rushed in and stood before it in ecstasy. Santa Claus had indeed come into the redwoods, had made even of his little redwood sucker a beautiful Christmas-tree!

In the leanto, back of the tree, Duncan Lewis had scarcely time to slip into his blankets with his clothes on before Reddy burst in upon him with the news of the wonder that had come to *his* tree.

"Dad," he whispered, "Dad, *he did come*. The tree's chuck full!"

Lewis turned over with a grunt of sleep and hid his face in his blankets.

"Dad, Dad, can't you understand? She *wasn't* fooling; he did come; my tree's full of things. Didn't you hear him putting them on?"

But still only his father's heavy breathing answered him.

Anyway, the "kids" should come and see right away, even if his father wouldn't wake up. It might all vanish before morning, or that highwayman Santa Claus come and take them all away.

With shakes and digs, one after another, Reddy aroused the sleeping children, making them sit up on the edge of their board bunks. Thus, in the bright light that came from the tree room, staring and gaping, they listened for the first time to a wonderful tale of a wonderful thing. What of it was dream, what of it reality, what the midnight imagination of their big brother, Reddy, only Lewis, glowing with more than one emotion beneath his blanket, knew.

The tale ended, Reddy formed them in line, according to size, then led them out into that land of the enchanted tree. Hand-in-hand they went, with wide-open eyes and mouths silently agape. Twice they circled the little redwood, twice stopped and stood in awe beneath its glory. But it was only the baby among them that spoke.

"O-o-o, Weddy," he said, "O-o-o, Weddy," and again, his little neck twisting for one last look at the beautiful thing as Reddy led them away with promises of a to-morrow, "O-o-o, Weddy!"

One after another the little ones dropped off to sleep. Even Lewis snored honestly. But Reddy, wide awake, stared out at his tree. There was no sleep for him. A curious idea had gotten into his round, red head, an idea that he could not get out. So he thought and thought, and, after thinking, determined upon action.

The thought came to him first as he showed the children the tree. It was in the form of a beautiful pink doll. The moment his eyes caught sight of it standing by the tree he knew that it could not possibly have been meant for any of them, and instantly the story he had heard at Boulder of the hold-up of the stage by the redwood Santa Claus came back to him. So beautiful a doll was meant for only one person in the

redwoods. There was no question in Reddy's mind as to who that person was. Santa Claus had left it here on his tree by mistake. He felt some disgust at so absurd a mistake on the part of Santa Claus. But there was only one thing to do about it, and that one thing he proceeded to do.

A candle or two still burned about the tree, but their light was flickering and unsteady. Nevertheless, Reddy had little difficulty in wrapping up the doll. Other things on the tree too now appeared to him as curiously unsuited either to the "kids" or to him. A small doll's carriage and a doll's silk parasol were chief among these.

"Well, you *must* have been rattled," he said, addressing the absent Saint, but then, finding a plausible excuse for the mistakes, he apologized: "But, of course, you didn't know there weren't any children up here that could use such nice things, did you? 'Cause you never been here before."

Unceremoniously he relieved the tree of its questionable articles. Tying them securely in a gunnysack, he threw the bundle over his shoulder, blew out the candles, and was off again down the mountain.

VI.

BOULDER was sound asleep. A faint line of light was just beginning to creep in back of the trees on the range in the east, but deep in the mountains one would hardly have called it morning. Bill, feeding his horses for an early start to the coast, saw a small boy, with a pack over his shoulder, cross the foot-bridge below his stables and climb the bank at the rear of the Hennessee house. Though it was too dark to distinguish features, Bill felt that it was Redwood Lewis. He was thinking of Reddy at that very moment, and that fact, as well as the sack that the boy carried and the direction he took, aroused the stage-driver's curiosity and he followed. A hundred yards in the boy's wake he too climbed the bank into the Hennessee back yard.

Reddy had stopped before the back door of the house and stood hesitating, as if uncertain how to proceed, when Bill came upon him suddenly.

With a smothered exclamation the boy rushed to him. "Bill, Bill," he whispered, drawing close, "what do you think's happened?"

Bill shook his head.

"I do' know, Reddy, 'nless it's Christmas."

"Yes, it's Christmas all right, but that ain't it. That old redwood Santa Claus, you know, that you said held up the stage 'cause he ran out of goods last night, well, he's just gone crazy; he's just gone and got everything all balled up."

Bill caught his breath. What was the boy telling him? Did he know about it, then?

But Reddy went on excitedly, yet all in whispers, for the Hennessee house was in darkness and no one astir.

"You see, Bill, I had a kind of a Christmas-tree all ready for him last night. It wasn't a real Christmas-tree, Bill, only a redwood sucker, you know, but it looked pretty good for a sucker, and you know, Bill, after he held up the stage he must just have got his things all balled up, 'cause he left lots of presents that I know he meant for Minnie Hennessee—dolls and things like that. I only found it out by accident when I was showing the kids the tree after I came back looking for Dad. And course, as soon as I knew it I had to bring 'em down. She'd been disappointed."

Bill's glare had grown into something terrible—a great grin that he was trying to keep serious. To Reddy, however, the expression was the perfection of interest.

"They're here in this sack," Reddy went on, lifting the gunny into Bill's arms, "and, Bill, won't you just write a note we can pin on and say that Santa Claus left 'em up at my house by mistake?"

But for Bill, old, hardened stage-driver that he was, such faith was too much. Tears came into his eyes. He caught Reddy off his feet and pressed the red head close against his breast.

"You little Brick," he said, "you little Brick!"

Then he wrote the note on an old envelope, and Reddy pinned it on and stood the sack by the door where the first one up must see it.

And as Christmas Day dawned pink over Boulder, Reddy whistled gayly up the trail, back to his own little redwood sucker.



A GIFT

BY HELEN M. RICHARDSON

"GIVE me your gold," I said to her:
She bent her stately head,
And all of Ophir's richest store
Within my hand she shed.

I held the gift as one on whom
A queen had deigned to nod;
Then, lifting high the yellow plume,
Said, "Thank you, Goldenrod."

DEATH AND LIFE

A VISION AT CHRISTMAS

By Clinton Dangerfield



IN the early days of men the Lord sent two powers on earth to have dominion over them. One of these was Death—the other Life.

The stern front of Life showed what he really was: unmerciful, exacting, swift to demand obedience to a thousand laws, swift to punish with the keen sword of pain when those laws were broken.

His eyes were the eyes of a war-lord; his hand as cold as iron—and as strong.

The tasks he set were many. Few of these were to the liking of the children of men, though some thinkers perceived that out of these heavy tasks came strength, also that if one wrestled with them stoutly one might even master Life himself and compel him to graciousness.

Now the other power—Death—was a woman.

Tall she was, but so perfectly formed that her height was no blemish. Sleepy-eyed she was, but her slow, sweet smile was so infinitely tender and lovely that in the midst of their tasks men stopped to gaze on her as she passed.

At last one of the young men followed her. She spoke to him,—her voice being that unspeakable music which not even a violin can outsing,—and the young man returned into the fields of Life no more.

Then a little child, weary of flower-gathering, pulled at her garment's hem, and all the workers held their breath, waiting to see what Death would do; for Life had painted her in very evil colors.

But Death lifted the child and laid her on her own deep bosom and sang to her.

As she sang the child slept, and an exquisite smile lingered on its lips, as though its visions were very fair.

Then Death held out the child that the workers might see, and cried:

“Oh ye who labor, beset with unending toil, see ye how I have blessed the child? Never more shall the heat of summer vex her, nor the cold of winter! I have made her deaf to sorrow and unmoved by the vibrations ye call joy. Forever shall her brow go unwrinkled, and

because she hath chosen me I will give her the key to Heaven's immortal gates."

And a worker cried,—

"Ye have blessed the child because she was your chosen one?"

The cry was a question.

Said Death dreamily,—

"As I gave the child peace, so would I give it to all who come to me—trusting me wholly!"

Looking out across the blazing fields she stretched her rounded arms and cried: "Ye are all mine! Lover of souls am I!"

And with one accord they threw down their tools and followed her into a far land, beyond the dominion of Life.

Now Life was vexed exceedingly by the unfinished task. He went straightway to the Lord and complained how Death had led away part of his workers.

And the Lord sent a great white angel unto the remainder and forbade them, through the angel, to hearken unto Death until they could serve Life no longer.

For the Lord knew that the stern dominion of Life must be, for the sake of the men he hoped to complete.

But only a few, a very few, of the children of men obeyed the angel. Let Death but pass the toilers, and her beauty was so great they continued to desert their posts and follow after her.

Then Life cried unto the Lord with a great voice,—

"Death seduces my servants!"

And the Lord said,—

"Deal with Death as thou wilt."

Therefore Life seized on Death and cut away her perfumed locks, and put on her a painted mask, most hideous to behold. And he sealed the lips of Death, saying, "Be thou dumb, and be thou no longer known as a woman." With this he cast over Death's wonderful form a black mantle, like a pall, and on it Life painted,—

"This is the King of Terrors!"

Then he sent Death forth, and thereafter whenever she came near the workers they fled from her and cried aloud unto Life,—

"Matters not how hard thy tasks, oh dear Life, if thou wilt but save us from this frightful Death!"

And Life said unto the Lord,—

"Have I not done well?"

And He answered in exceeding sorrow:

"Needs must thy work on Death stand. And this because of the weakness of men who were seduced by her beauty and who heeded not my angel's voice. Yet very differently had I planned for my people. For in the beginning I set the loveliness of Death plainly before them,

that they might endure their tasks happily, knowing how sweet the end would be. But they have defeated my wisdom. On their own heads be it!"

And Life went his way, satisfied. Thereafter, when a child or man became useless to him he cast it into the arms of Death, because its task was finished.

And the soul of Death sang to the soul of the mortal given her, though her lips were dumb, and she blessed it with an infinite blessing and bore it away.

But the toilers mourned greatly that Death should have dominion over one of their number, and they turned the more desperately to Life, who smiled sternly and was content.



WIND AND SNOW

BY MINNA IRVING

WHEN sleep had closed the lattices
 Along the village street,
 I heard the clang of iron mail,
 The ring of steel-shod feet.
 I pulled the muslin curtain by,
 Between it peering forth,
 And lo! beheld a wild gray knight
 Come riding from the north.

The frost was in his streaming hair,
 The ice was on his beard,
 He shouted shrilly as he passed,
 His cry was long and weird.
 He struck the boughs that barred his way
 And broke them in his flight,
 Across his saddle-bow he bore
 A maiden veiled in white.

My breath was frozen on the pane,
 My lips were blue with cold,
 When far away his strident voice
 Died out upon the wold.
 And when the clouded morning dawned,
 All colorless and pale,
 Before my door lay soft and white
 The maiden's snowy veil.

HIS HOUR OF GREATNESS

By Elizabeth Knight Tompkins

Author of "Her Majesty," "The Things that Count," "Talks with Barbara," etc.



IT was the middle of the afternoon on the twenty-fourth of December. In a studio in one of the big studio buildings in New York two men were standing in front of an easel holding a portrait to which they bore the relation of painter and subject. The latter was speaking.

"There is no doubt that it is the best thing you have done: it will do everything for your reputation. There is a life and an originality of treatment about it that people are bound to recognize."

"But the likeness?" asked his friend as he paused.

"Well, you have got my features there. That's my nose and mouth, those are my eyes; but the expression—my dear Nevil, I never looked like that in my life. You have mixed me up with some other sitter."

"How do you know that you never have that look?" Nevil Field demanded. "You never saw your face when you were off guard, never in your life. Now I have seen you with that expression—not often, I admit, but often enough to make me resolve to capture it. I am convinced that it represents the real you."

"How did you bring it there when you wanted to paint it?" the other man demanded with evident curiosity.

Nevil laughed, and his laugh had a touch of bitterness. "That's my secret," he said.

Robert Eustis glanced quickly at him, as if struck by a sudden suspicion or visited by a sudden remembrance, but he did not follow up the subject.

"Likeness or not, it certainly answers my purpose," he said instead. "My mother will be delighted with it."

"It is a picture that your grandchildren will fight over: it has a look of ancestry. You used to be rather an ugly young fellow, Bob, but I'll be hanged if you don't grow better looking every year of your life. We'll have you setting up for a professional beauty before long."

"And you making your fortune off photographs of this," Eustis answered with a laugh. "But where's Paul?" he asked abruptly.

"Virginia Ross took him out to see the shops in their Christmas finery," Nevil explained. "They'll be back soon."

"How is she—Miss Ross?" Eustis asked with a little hesitation

after a moment's pause. "I haven't seen her for a long time," he added.

"She is very busy. She has been painting the Van Brunt children and has made a good thing of it. It's a perfect shame—she could go so far, that girl, if her heart were only in her work."

"And isn't it?" Eustis demanded.

"Apparently not. She does her work conscientiously and well, because she was born with a great deal of talent and has acquired a certain power of application, but she doesn't live for it. If it were not for the welcome addition to her income, I don't believe she would care if she never saw a paint-brush again. People who feel like that never go beyond a certain point, of course."

"I wonder why she feels like that?" Eustis demanded, looking intently, even significantly, at his friend.

Nevil did not return his look as he answered:

"The trouble is that Virginia Ross is a woman before she is an artist. She is not a person whom a career, whom applause, can satisfy."

"And what can satisfy her?" Robert Eustis asked this with the resolute air of a man who has made up his mind to pursue a subject he longs to drop.

Nevil shrugged his shoulders, a trick which, together with a good French accent, was all that remained to suggest his student days in Paris. "Only the usual thing,—the one thing,—I fancy. There they come now," he broke off with evident relief. There had been a certain visible tension between the two men during the latter part of their conversation. "I hear Paul's excited chatter. I will let them in." His friend stopped him.

"Michael will let them in. Let me tell you what I came for. I want Paul to go with me to select presents for some little neighbors of ours in the country, and I thought you could join us later and we'd have dinner together."

"All right," returned Nevil. "But, Bob, I thought you were going home to-day?"

"So I am, by the nine o'clock train."

"Why don't you wait and go up with us in the morning?"

"I can't. You see, it would be forlorn for my mother to have her Christmas morning alone. Besides, I want to see her face when she sees my picture. I have some arrangements of various kinds to make too. All the children in the neighborhood are coming to skate Christmas afternoon. Michael reports that the ice is in beautiful condition. You must be sure to bring your skates, you and Paul. But why don't they come in?" he broke off. While he had been speaking his eyes had been on the door.

"No doubt they are talking with Paul's friend Michael," said Nevil.

As he spoke the door opened and a tall young woman appeared in the doorway. She smiled at Nevil Field and held out her hand to Eustis with a friendly little,—

“Well!”

“Have you bought out New York?” he asked.

“We did our shopping days ago. We were just looking to-day. Paul is crazy with excitement,” she added, turning to the child’s father. “He would be ill if it were to last much longer. He told me that he couldn’t sleep last night for thinking of the good time he was going to have at Mr. Eustis’s. Now he is making elaborate plans with Michael for his visit. He couldn’t carry them all out if he were to stay a week instead of twenty-four hours.”

“It is a satisfaction to invite a guest who is so flatteringly and undisguisedly delighted to come,” said Eustis.

“I don’t see how we can do anything to tranquillize him until after to-morrow,” Nevil remarked. Virginia Ross had moved over to the portrait and was looking at it intently.

“Well?” said Nevil at last, as she did not speak.

“It is wonderful, wonderful!” she replied.

“Do you mean the technique or the likeness?” he demanded.

“Both,” she replied.

“You don’t really think my face ever wore such an expression as that?” Robert interposed.

Virginia turned to him with a slow smile that lit up all her face and transformed it. In repose her face was a little heavy.

“I don’t think it, I know it.”

“You have actually seen it?”

“I have.”

“When?”

Virginia laughed. “Oh, that would be telling,” she returned lightly. “Nevil has caught you in one of your moments of greatness, Mr. Eustis; that is all. It was very clever of him to do it, and that he has this power is the reason why he is going to be a great portrait painter.”

“One of my moments of greatness! Have I ever had one?”

“I suppose we all have them, moments—or it may be hours—when we live on a distinctly higher plane than the one on which our everyday life is passed.”

“Have I them?” demanded Nevil. “Have you ever seen me in one? I wish you’d ring a bell or punch a button when you do.”

“I have often seen you in moments of æsthetic or emotional elevation. As to the moral upliftedness, which I suppose is what one sees in this picture, I don’t know. At all events, you will have one before you die. Everyone with a soul does.”

"Do you think my clerks would consider this a good likeness?" Robert asked.

"I am sure your mother will."

He laughed. "Ah, that is unkind," he protested.

"I didn't mean it so," she returned simply.

"I must go and get something to do this up in if Michael is to catch his train," said Nevil, looking at his watch.

"Do you suppose his wife has her moments of greatness?" Robert asked in a low voice after Nevil had left the room.

"Poor Emily!" Virginia exclaimed. "Perhaps she has—for her," she continued. "No doubt there was a certain greatness in her letting Paul spend his holidays with Nevil. You see, he might meet a model in the hall or see one smoke a cigarette." She spoke with quiet amusement rather than bitterness.

"How he adores that child!" Robert exclaimed.

"He is a different man when he has him with him," she returned.

"And yet she is your cousin!" he remarked irrelevantly.

"Yes, but I broke away from it early," she explained.

"How does she like your relation with Nevil?" he demanded resolutely.

"I don't know and I don't care. She has dropped me completely, and it isn't worth while trying to make her understand." She spoke wearily, as if the subject had little interest for her.

"Would she like it better if she did—understand?" he asked.

Virginia glanced up at him quickly. "Do you know——" she was beginning, but he interrupted her.

"Yes, I know. I am very impertinent. I beg your pardon."

"What is it you want to know?" she asked gently. "I can't see why it matters to you, but I have nothing to hide."

"Nevil and I have been friends since we were boys," he interposed.

"Yes; and I know the strength of your friendship for each other. It has been a very real thing."

"It has, indeed—to stand what it has stood," he returned with a sigh.

"Do you want to know whether we love each other,—is that it?—for I can't suppose that, knowing us both, your wondering goes beyond this?" There was a challenge in her tone, which he answered with a fervent,—

"God forbid!"

The tension of Virginia's face relaxed. "I will tell you——" she was beginning, when the door opened and Nevil came back into the room.

"Michael is going to do it up," he explained, and, taking the picture from the easel, he went out of the room, leaving the door open behind him, and returning before his companions could speak again.

"I say, Bob," he exclaimed, "Paul has been telling an interesting tale of the grand young lady he saw with you at Tiffany's this afternoon. He confided in me that he thought she was buying you a wedding-ring. He was quite indignant because Virginia wouldn't let him go up and speak to you."

"She was extremely good to look at," Virginia put in with a friendly smile.

"That was Miss Hamilton. I met her there by accident——" Robert was beginning, but he broke off as the other two commenced to laugh. "Hang it!" he exclaimed. "Of course, I look foolish if you act like that. I give you my word——"

"Oh, we understand perfectly," Nevil put in teasingly. Robert picked up a sofa-pillow and let it fly at him.

Nevil dodged, cowering down behind Virginia in an attitude of extreme fear. "Don't! You might hit me!" he pleaded, holding her skirt about him like a frightened child.

She patted him on the head. "Mother won't let him hurt you! Bad, naughty man!" she said caressingly. At this Robert dropped the game.

"I must go," he said, picking up his hat with an abrupt change of manner.

Virginia turned away to hide the smile of satisfaction on her face.

"We'll meet you at my rooms later," he said to Nevil.

"Why don't you invite Virginia to dine with us?" Nevil asked in a mischievous tone.

"I should be only too glad if she would come. Will you, Miss Ross?" he asked, turning to Virginia. She shook her head.

"It is not because I didn't do it of my own motion? I should have spent the evening kicking myself for not having thought of it."

She shook her head again. "No: I am one of those conceited people who think first whether they want to do a thing."

"And you don't want to do this?"

"I don't feel sociable. I am in a mood when my own society suits me best."

"You find this holiday season hard to bear?"

"I do. How nice that was of him!" she exclaimed, turning to Nevil.

"You mean that he didn't make a personal application of your remark, or that he invited you to dinner?"

"Most people's vanity would have been up in arms immediately. They would have exclaimed, 'It is evidently time I went,' or something else of that nature. Many would have tried to get a cut back at me."

"There is nothing small about Robert Eustis," Nevil remarked.

"No: and this is what your picture shows, so he that runs may read."

"That kind of sensitiveness gives away one's secret lack of serenity in regard to one's own importance. One doesn't have to be large-minded to discover that. I have too much vanity to betray my hurt feelings, even though I may be bleeding to death internally. I am not willing to admit the possibility of my being alighted," Robert explained with a laugh.

"Well, if you choose to put it that way," remarked Nevil.

Robert held out his hand to Virginia. "Good-by, then, if you really won't come."

"Why have I been standing all this time?" she exclaimed as the door closed behind him, sinking down into a big chair in front of the fire.

"It's your own fault. I suggested repeatedly that it was just as cheap to sit, and Bob offered you every chair in the room."

"I didn't think what I was doing. How nice and warm it is in here, Nevil: it is so cold outside. I am going to stay here for a while, if I may. I am so tired of my room—and of myself," she added reflectively.

"And yet you wouldn't go to dinner with us. I wonder why?" he said, taking the chair opposite hers and lighting a cigarette.

"That you will never know."

"Perhaps I know already."

She glanced at him quickly. "Perhaps you do," she replied, letting her gaze return to the fire. "You couldn't work if I didn't stay," she began presently, breaking the pause that followed her words. "It is getting too dark. But perhaps you were going somewhere?"

"No, nowhere. I was wondering what I should do with myself until it was time to meet Bob and the kid. We don't seem to have seen as much as usual of each other, Virginia. Give an account of yourself."

She sighed before she answered.

"It would have to be such a bad one. I despise people who complain of life."

Nevil reached out his hand and took a book from the table. He turned the leaves until he found the place he was looking for.

"Listen to what Maeterlinck thinks about it," he said, beginning to read. '*Elles*'—obscure lives, the man means—'*Elles nous apprennent que, même au sein de grands malheurs physiques, il n'y a rien d'irréparable et que se plaindre du destin c'est presque toujours se plaindre de l'indigence de son âme.*'"

"I know it: it's absolutely true," Virginia returned sadly. "But my soul is so poverty-stricken these days, Nevil. It's a regular beggar, whining for a crumb of comfort. Let me whine to you a little."

"Whine away," he said with an encouraging smile.

It was several minutes before she spoke. When she did, she took up her subject at a different point.

"I had such a strange dream before I awoke this morning. I seemed to be arguing with someone who had power over the workings of the universe. I suppose it was God. I was calling Him to account for the discrepancy between our young ideals and beliefs and life as we find it later. I said that it was manifestly unfair for us to be allowed to grow up in illusions, in beliefs behind which there was no reality. Take the wonderful sense of the romantic in life, take the charm of the things we have not yet experienced, the glamour that hangs about moonlight and natural beauty and music and poetry, the atmosphere pervading them that stirs our emotional nature and, yet, to which we cannot put a name. Now I said that it was unfair to put these things before us unless there were corresponding realities behind them. The same rule ought to apply to life as to detective stories: the solution must be adequate to the mystery. Now I have never found anything in life that corresponded to the promise. After a certain age everything is so empty."

"There is supposed to be one thing that fills the bill," Nevil interposed. "One thing that represents the reality behind the moonshine, the poetry, and the glamour—at least, so I have been told," he added with a smile.

"Then a beneficent power ought not to place it so utterly beyond the reach of most of us. But, to tell the truth, Nevil, I am afraid that I don't believe in the One Thing as I once did. As I look about among the people to whom it has come, I see only disillusionment, ennui, mutual irritation, and content in separation. Oh, how tired of each other the husbands and wives I know are! And what avails it to be given a thing one minute if it be taken away the next and the emptiness of life made all the more apparent. There is no use talking, life is a cheat, a regular bunco game."

"Did you tell this to your God?" he asked with interest.

"No: my dream was only a fragment, just a passing sensation from sleeping to waking. I had hardly begun on my grievances when I awoke."

"What was your God like?—anthropomorphic?"

"I don't even remember that. Of course, I could make a good story of it, but there was really nothing to it. Only I have gone on all day following up the train of thought. Oh Nevil, it is dreadful to be as dead as I am! Not to really want anything in Heaven or earth! It would be better for me if I were really suffering about something. This emptiness of life is killing me!"

"You seem to have a blessing or two, if you will forgive my mentioning them!" he interposed.

"Don't you suppose I know it? When I compare my life, its freedom and ease and all the rest of it, with that of other people, I feel as if

I ought to go down on my knees and thank God fasting." There was a pause while each followed the train of thought suggested by the end of the quotation, which she had left unspoken. Presently Virginia began again. "It is not that I consider my life hard as lives go. I know of none that I would exchange for it. My complaint is that after first youth all life is impossible to women who can both think and feel. It may be different for men. I suppose it is, they being so constituted that they can satisfy themselves with ambition, with acquisition, with impersonal things. But women——" She broke off abruptly and rose from her chair, glancing about in search of the furs she had laid aside.

"You are not going?" he demanded from the depths of the chair in which he had stretched himself out.

"Yes. I am ashamed of myself. I despise people who talk this way. You don't seem very happy yourself to-day, Nevil. You are thinking of something else. I am sure we should both be better alone."

Nevil closed the door behind her and came back to the fire.

"I'm a beast!" he said aloud as he sank into his chair once more and took up the train of thought he had been following while Virginia had been talking. For three-quarters of an hour he sat there, letting his cigarette go out for lack of attention, evidently absorbed in some perplexing thought. The problem before him was not a new one. For several years it had harassed him, lying in wait for every idle moment, thrusting itself between him and his work, usurping time that other interests claimed. Often after a long struggle he would lay it aside as settled, only to find himself again, on the first opportunity, marshalling the pros and cons against each other. The problem concerned itself with the eternal conflict between egotism and altruism. In the concrete, should he, Nevil Field, clear away the misunderstandings and bring together these two people who loved each other, when their gain meant his own loss?

He never could tell when and how the whole story had become so clear to him; but know it he did as certainly as if each had made him their father confessor. Years before Virginia had told him a tale with names and localities carefully suppressed or disguised, and of this he had come to know Robert Eustis the hero. It was all so plain to him now, this story that he would have given years of his life not to know. He knew that long ago Robert, then a poor man, had asked Virginia to marry him; that she, suffering because of another man, had refused him, with the further explanation, believed in the first disillusionment of youth, that she should never marry unless she married a wealthy man for what he could give her. Later she had grown to love Robert, but the money which he had made prevented her from showing herself accessible; and Robert, still loving her, had held back because of his belief that she returned his, Nevil's, own love. The case had been

further complicated by Virginia's jealousy of Elizabeth Hamilton, the daughter of Robert's partner.

If the two had seen each other often, no doubt they would have found each other out in spite of misunderstandings; but their infrequent meetings were only new opportunities for misinterpretation, for pretences of indifference, for mutual pain-giving. Virginia had come in fresh from the sight of Robert and Miss Hamilton together: she had met his friendliness with a manner compounded to represent indifference masked by assumed cordiality. The touch on Nevil's hair, the caress in her tones, had been for Robert's benefit, with the result that the two had parted farther apart than ever.

"Of course, if I had any real manliness, I should tell Bob the truth, that it is not I she loves," Nevil said to himself at last, stooping to put some wood on the fire. It was so easy to say, "Tell Bob the truth," but how much it implied! If Virginia did not love himself, at least she belonged to no other man. He was her friend; it was to him that she came for companionship and comfort. There was no one on earth so near to him as she was. If she married Robert, all that would be over. She would have thought and attention for no one else, being a woman to whom love was all in all. He knew just how she would treat him; would meet him with real pleasure, would ask him all about his concerns with apparent interest; but before he had answered one of her questions, an absent-minded expression would creep into her eyes and she would be dreaming of Robert. Things were bad enough as they were: the other he could not endure. He simply could not stand by and see their happiness, himself shut out.

His love for Virginia had been of slow growth and was all the stronger for that reason. She had come to make them a visit at a time when the strain of an uncongenial marriage had become intolerable, and afterwards, when he had at last found courage to break loose, she too had set up a studio in New York and had come to him for advice and criticism, becoming the centre of his life in a way he would not have believed possible, she was so different from the women he had hitherto found himself loving. Yet love her he did, not with the fire of early youth, perhaps, but with the depth and steadiness of maturity. To give her up was to take all happiness out of his life, his lonely life, in which he did not even have the companionship of his little son, except at long intervals.

Late the next afternoon, Christmas Day, Virginia sat in her room, looking out at the snow that had begun to fall only an hour before, although there had been promise of it all day. The temperature had risen greatly in the night and the day had dawned overcast and cheerless. Virginia had not left the hotel, shrinking from feigning a mood

appropriate to the day. She had sat with a book before her, reading little and thinking much, the same sad old thoughts. She had not gone down to the Christmas dinner that was served at two o'clock. The idea of sitting through it at a table with five other people, each of whom was utterly indifferent to every one of the others, was too intolerable, so she had eaten some graham crackers and an orange in her room.

There were some evidences of Christmas remembrances on the table, several books with their tissue-paper wrappings, red ribbon and sprig of holly lying beside them, a cake of violet soap, a vase of pink carnations, and a crimson cyclamen in a pot. Virginia looked at them occasionally but with no pleasure. She remembered that there were many people to whom material possessions brought happiness and thought of the difference between their attitude to life and her own; accused herself of ingratitude towards the givers of these gifts and acquitted herself of the charge. Gratitude could not be expected for that which was not desired. It was not gifts or the casual kindness sending them that she wanted. There was but one thing on earth that she desired and, lacking it, everything else was dust and ashes. She did not pity herself for having no home or near relatives, for spending Christmas in a hotel. Feeling as she did, it mattered little under what conditions she drew the breath of life.

It was nearly five o'clock and would have been dark except for the white reflection from the snow, when a knock came at her door.

"Come in," she called indifferently, expecting a bell-boy. To her surprise, she recognized Nevil Field by the light from the hall.

"I came directly up. I didn't have time to wait," he explained.

"What is the matter?" she demanded anxiously.

"Nothing now—I give you my word. Let me get my breath and I will tell you."

He took a chair at the other end of the register. "Don't look at me like that," he panted. "Nobody is any the worse. Paul fell through the ice and Bob dived under and got him out. I don't believe Paul has even taken cold."

"Oh!" she gasped as he paused for breath.

"I told you it was all right," he protested. "Bob hit his head and was unconscious for some time, but they say he did himself no real damage and will be as well as ever in a day or two."

"Then why are you here?"

"I came to get you to go up there with me. You know Mrs. Eustis is such an invalid, and Paul keeps asking for you. You could be of great service." He did not look at her as he spoke, and his voice was self-conscious and unnatural.

"Does Mrs. Eustis want me to come?" she demanded.

"Yes. She sent you a most cordial invitation. She says she would consider it a great kindness if you would come and look after Paul a little. The maids are very willing, but you know how he shrinks from strangers, and I am so helpless."

Virginia had risen. "When does the next train go?" she asked.

"You have fifteen minutes to get ready in. I will wait for you downstairs."

They hardly spoke on the journey out. Once Virginia asked a question about the accident, but stopped him before he could answer. The thought of what might have happened was too painful to them both for the thing to bear discussing. Mrs. Eustis was delightfully cordial. Virginia was made to feel herself a most welcome guest.

"I know all about you. Robert has told me about you," she said with an affectionate friendliness, after she had repeated the doctor's last encouraging report.

Mrs. Eustis seldom left her sofa. A maid showed Virginia her room and then took her to the one where Paul was. She found his father there.

"Hush," he said. "Paul has fallen asleep."

"I don't quite see why you brought me; Paul doesn't need me," she whispered reproachfully.

He took her hand. "Do you think I would put you in any position that would compromise your dignity?" he whispered back.

"No: I know you would not," she answered.

"Then will you trust me?"

"I will," she said, after a moment's hesitation, a light rising in her eyes that she tried in vain to hide.

"Then come with me." Still holding her hand, he led her down the hall to a room at the end.

She released herself and drew back as he started to open the door. "Is he in there?" she asked.

"Yes, and alone. I have just told him that I have brought you down and asked him if he would like to see you."

"What did he say?"

"I will leave him to tell you that." He opened the door and, again taking her hand, led her into the room, a large, square room, lit only by a blazing fire and a shaded lamp on a table. In the big four-post mahogany bed Robert Eustis was lying, propped up by pillows. His head was bandaged, but, except for a little pallor, he did not look ill.

"This young woman is afraid the shock of seeing her will be too much for you, Bob," Nevil began.

Robert held out his hand. "It might be, but not in the sense she means. Come over here and sit down by me. I want to realize that you are actually in my house at last. Have you had any dinner?"

"I am not hungry," she replied.

"Well, I am, ravenously. We'll have a feast by and by. The idea of cheating a man out of his Christmas dinner! Couldn't you really eat something?"

"I am afraid I ought not to talk to you," she protested, attempting no longer to hide the happiness in her face.

Robert laughed. "It's perfectly absurd, their keeping me in bed. My head aches, of course, as might be expected, but except for that I should never know I had been through the ice."

Virginia gave a shudder. "Oh, don't let's talk of it—I can't bear to! I am sure I shall dream of it!" she exclaimed.

"She is such a sensitive little thing," Nevil explained. There had been something strange in his manner from the first moment Virginia had seen him, but now it was even more marked—an appearance of strength, of resolution, of upliftedness. Both his companions looked at him in surprise. "You don't know, Bob, what queer ideas she takes into her head at times," he continued. "For instance, she thinks other people might imagine her capable of marrying them for their money. You wouldn't believe that of her, would you?"

"Never—not even on her own word! I know beyond doubt that if she ever allow a man the exquisite happiness of calling her his wife, it will be for the one reason."

There was something so significant in the manner of both men that Virginia was glad of the shadow in which she was sitting. Nevil walked towards the door.

"I am going to Paul," he explained.

"Oh, don't!" Virginia protested involuntarily, but he took no notice.

When he reached the door, he turned and said: "By the way, do either of you know of any artist I could engage to paint my portrait at the present moment? A tintype might do," he added whimsically. He closed the door behind him and they were alone.

"Virginia," Robert began in a low voice that trembled as he spoke,—“Virginia, Nevil told me just now that you had never loved him. I have never learned how not to love you. Is there any chance for me?"

Virginia flung herself on her knees beside the bed and buried her face in the clothes.

"Oh Robert," she sobbed, "that this should come to me on Christmas Day!"



THE BREAD ON THE WATERS

By Alfred Sutro

Author of "The Cave of Illusion," "Women in Love," etc.



MISS MARRISDAILE was conscious of a pricking sensation in her throat, but she restrained herself.

"I could stop in my bedroom, you know, dear," urged Miss Hartopp plaintively.

"It would fidget me, Lucy," replied Miss Marrisdaile, straining a smile to cover her impatience. "And this flat of ours is such a band-box—one can hear every word——"

Miss Hartopp raised protesting hands. "Oh Morrie! You don't think I would listen?"

Again Miss Marrisdaile essayed her wan, deprecating smile. "Of course not, Lucy—what an idea! But the mere notion that another person is within earshot—don't you see?—is disconcerting, that's all. And as I haven't the faintest conception of what he can want of me, or why he should ask to see me alone——"

Miss Hartopp giggled. "I'm sure that he means to——"

"My dear Lucy, don't be absurd. I hadn't seen him for ten or twelve years till I met him the other day. But it fidgets me, and I shall be more comfortable, that's all. Besides, you owe the Wilsons a visit——"

"As if they ever wanted to see me!"

"That's the mistake you make—you're becoming hypochondriacal, my child, and it's bad at your time of life!"

Miss Hartopp's pale blue eyes turned misty and her chin trembled. "I'm only two years older than you, Morvenna!"

"At *our* time of life, then! Buck up, Lucy, for God's sake! After all, we're not fossils! Go and see the Wilsons, and be bright and cheerful—you can, if you like. Good Heaven! they ask you to dinner, and that's worth something."

"They send me down with the parson," complained Miss Hartopp.

"A parson's better than nothing," answered her friend. "Our banquets at home aren't so remarkably festive that you can afford to quarrel with half your visiting-list. Go now, like a good girl."

Miss Hartopp smiled weakly and fumbled at her gloves. "Is my hat all right, Morrie?"

"Quite: it looks very well."

"Do you think I was wise to alter the ribbon?"

"Yes; it looks better that way."

"If only it doesn't rain——"

"My dear, you have an umbrella."

"If a drop or two fall on that hat, it will be ruined."

"The sun's shining, Lucy; there'll be no rain to-day."

"You think not? I saw quite a black cloud while I was dressing. Shall I take an omnibus, do you think, or the underground?"

Miss Marrisaile heaved a deep sigh and her foot tapped the floor. "I should take whichever was nearest," she answered shortly.

Her friend was reproachful. "Oh Morrie, that's so like you! When you know that my face gets greasy if I have to walk in the sun!"

Miss Marrisaile looked round the room before she spoke. "Mrs. Wilson won't bother about your face, Lucy."

"But I shall. I shall feel uncomfortable. Besides, there might be somebody there. Though I've rubbed a bit of cream on my handkerchief, and while the servant's opening the door——"

"Exactly; so that's all right. You had better go now, dear. Good-by."

Miss Hartopp offered her cheek. "I wish you would take a little more interest in me, Morrie."

"Lucy, Lucy, don't be silly."

"I know you're quite indifferent as to how I look. Of course, it's all right for you, with your complexion——"

"Are you going?" It had escaped her and she couldn't help it. Miss Hartopp gave a startled look, and with an "Oh Morrie!" she fluttered away, the outer door opened and closed, and rustling skirts flounced down the stairs.

Morvenna drew a deep breath, and her hand gripped a chair, seized it, and shook it. Then her eyes turned to the tiny clock on the mantelpiece. "Four already," she murmured. "He'll be here in half-an-hour!" And she went hurriedly to her bedroom.

Mr. Chambers found the ascent of the five floors fatiguing, and puffed considerably when he attained the last landing. He was a pleasant-looking man of forty-two or three, a trifle corpulent, and by no means of distinguished appearance; but he had kind gray eyes, and a certain air of strength somewhat corrected his massiveness. He paused for a moment as he stood outside; then pressed the bell and stared curiously at the door, which was opened by Miss Marrisaile herself.

"How do you do, Mr. Chambers?" She had schooled her voice: it rang clear, but a tremor was there. "Come in. I'm glad to see you." He placed his hat and stick in the rack and followed her into the room. "Won't you sit down?"

Mr. Chambers let himself drop into a chair and looked at his hostess. "Do you know,—it struck me the other day,—you're not changed a bit."

Morvenna laughed. "I'm thirty-five."

"A woman's as old as she looks——"

"You're not changed much either. I *was* surprised when I saw you last week at the Martins'. And how are you?"

"Oh, I'm very well, thanks. You've a nice place here."

"They're not my things, you know, but my friend's. She loves all this bric-a-brac."

"Don't you?"

"Oh, I hate it! The room's small enough, and one can't stir without knocking something or other over. You knew her, by the way,—I wonder whether you will remember?—Lucy Hartopp."

"Hartopp? Dear me! a tall, graceful girl, who took such high honors at the University?"

"Yes, we're living together."

"Oh, that must be very pleasant. She's awfully clever, of course—and you always liked clever people."

Miss Marrisdaile bowed her head. "She had what they call brain-exhaustion five years ago—she had been working too hard—and was forced to give all that up."

"What a misfortune, poor thing! She was so brilliant."

"Yes, she overtaxed her brain. A woman's brain, it seems, can't stand very much. She had even to abandon her teaching. And now we two live together—for economy."

Mr. Chambers looked his sympathy. "And you still write, of course? I have read your books, you know."

"What an act of devotion!" She laughed. "I didn't know that you were one of my faithful two hundred."

"Two hundred?"

"Well, I published three books altogether, and that was the average sale."

"What a shame!"

"I don't know—they were poor stuff, really, although I didn't think so then."

"And I'm sure you don't now. Of course, my opinion's worth nothing, but—why, you had splendid notices!"

"One or two friends on the press spoke very well of them. But, at any rate, they didn't sell."

"You amaze me, you do indeed! Is that why nothing of yours has come out these last few years?"

"That is the reason. You see, publishers are scarcely philanthropists. I review,—when I can induce an editor to send me a book,—and I occasionally get a stray poem, or story, into a magazine."

Mr. Chambers could only say "Oh!" He was evidently very surprised, and fidgeted uncomfortably in his chair. Miss Marrisdaile broke the silence. "I was betwixt and between, you see—too good or too dull for the ordinary public, and not good enough to appeal to the people who really know. But we won't talk of myself—the subject's not fascinating. How about you?"

"Oh, I'm still in business, of course."

"And, I hope, prosperous?"

"Oh, yes, I've done very well. It's hard work, but I like it. You see, it's all I'm fit for,"—he laughed,—“as you used to tell me.”

Morvenna bit her lip. "Did I? I was a great fool in those days."

"Not at all, you were quite right. But I never was good at learning. Dear me, how I tried to read the books that you read!"

He fairly bubbled over at the recollection; then he took a more sombre tone.

"You will have heard of my poor wife's death—a little more than two years ago. She wasn't clever, you know—she was like me. But we weren't very happy."

"I am sorry. You have children?"

"Three: two girls and a boy. How strange it is that we should never have met, all these years, till last week!"

"I go out very seldom."

"I saw you once—at a first night at the Royalty. A friend of mine—at least, not exactly a friend, but I had helped him with money—had a piece done, and he gave me a ticket. In the dress-circle, you know—front row. And I saw you down there—in the stalls."

"Why didn't you speak to me?"

"Oh, you seemed to know everybody, and I hadn't the pluck!" He laughed merrily. "You were such a swell! Shaking hands with all the distinguished people in London, and I felt as though 'auctioneer' were written all over me."

Miss Marrisdaile smiled rather grimly. "The people weren't, perhaps, quite as distinguished as you think. Oh, do you know, I'm really very glad to see you, to have met you again! You bring quite a whiff of the old days. It must be about fifteen years ago that you first came to the house with poor Harold. What great friends you were!"

"The best chap I've ever known, he was."

"Yes. Poor Harold! My life might have been different if he hadn't died."

"Aren't you happy then, Morrie? Oh, I beg your pardon." He rose, and looked as though he had done something wrong. She smiled softly at him, and a tinge of faintest pink spread over her cheek. "I like you to call me Morrie," she said. "Why not? We're such old friends. We needn't be stiff with each other, Tom!"

The man looked at her out of his pleasant eyes and held out his hand, which she took. Then he sat down again and heaved a deep sigh of content.

"I'm glad you feel like that," he said; "it helps me a lot. Oh, yes, we're friends, and I'm a good friend—I'll say that. And, look here, I'll come to business straight away. You must have been very surprised when you got my letter?"

"Well, I was, of course. You told me I could do you a favor. By the way, how did you get my address?"

"In 'Who's Who.'"

"What, have they still got me there? That's wonderful too."

He leaned over and beamed at her. "My dear Morrie, you're a celebrity, and don't seem to know it."

She smiled rather wanly. "A celebrity! Well, we won't talk about that. But I like you to think that I am. And now, what is this favor?"

Mr. Chambers turned sheepish and looked almost furtively at her. "I want to marry again."

For a moment the room danced in her eyes. The thought she had not dared to formulate, that had been throbbing within her ever since she received his letter, now stared at her, shrieked in her ears. Dear God, it was true then! She saw, in a flash, her solitary, wretched existence now already behind her; her evenings of dull, bitter pain, her hopeless waking, her pillow wet with powerless, futile tears. The bold front crumbled that she had held to the world; love, the impossible, for which she had dared no longer even to yearn, love stood there. A man who saw her with the eyes of ten years ago, with eyes that were blind to her wrinkles, her faded hair, her wasted and shrunken figure. A heart on which she could rest her poor, weary heart: sympathy, sympathy—and, in the dim future, perhaps even children. And through the mist, the rainbow, her eye sought him who was hers, her own, her lover, her husband; she beamed on him hungrily, and all the while her face was rigid and calm, and she heard herself say, "So you want to remarry?"

He was swaying about in his chair and cracking his fingers. "Yes, Morrie, I do."

Oh, the luxury of being able to ask herself whether she would take him or not, this man she had so scornfully rejected twelve years ago! The dear delight, the keen gladness, of pretending to debate! There

was a side of her that marked, with a sneer, his huge hands and feet, his narrow forehead and double chin; that branded him "tradesman!"—a man who sold chairs and tables, bedroom suites. And she egged on this other self to advance its silly objections, to point out his clumsy boots, the way he breathed through his nose—his entire lack of higher culture, or feeling for art. And in that second of silence she floated on a broad river, and lilies rose up around her and covered her face, and there was music,—sweet, happy music,—and her soul was singing. Joy overwhelmed her; she half-closed her eyes as she thought of the lips that would soon be kissing her lips, of the shoulder her tired head would lean on, of the arm—the strong, strong arm—that would clasp her waist and scatter her cares. Oh God, dear God, this was good of Thee! At last, and at last!

"And as she's a niece of yours, I fancied that you——"

Had she heard? Was it true? Was it real? Rushing waters drowned her, she felt herself die. Her heart gave one leap and stopped. Miserable tears streamed from her eyes; all control, all restraint, had left her; she wrung her hands feebly as she sobbed and moaned, "I thought you meant me!"

"Morrie!"

He had sprung to his feet, and looked as though he had struck her, had stabbed her. All his roughness was gone; he shook, and yearned at her grief.

"Yes, I did! I thought you meant me!"

She didn't care, she didn't care! All was too black around her—too black—too black—too black! The hopeless future caught her again and crushed her; she saw the long procession of wretched to-morrows. Her biting pain broke down every barrier: she didn't care, she didn't care! And then he leaned forward and touched her; and, with a gasp and a cry, she seized hold of the reins—and lifted her head—and smiled.

"Sit down," she said, and her voice rang clear. "Oh, what a pretty exhibition!" She let her tears dry on her cheek and she waved her hand at him. "It's all right, and it's funny too. I *did* think you meant me! And—dear Lord!—I should have jumped at you! There! Open confession, you see. What a good fellow you are not to laugh. And now, after this little attack of hysteria,—my life is dull, you know, and I suppose I feed on myself,—now tell me, which is it, which of the two—Hilda or Maggie?"

He could not speak. He had looked into a woman's soul, and its loneliness appalled him: he was silent as before the dead. His fingers twitched; all that was unconscious within him was striving for utterance, clamoring to pierce the wall. He could only murmur, "Morrie, Morrie!"

Miss Marrisdaile was quite calm now. "My dear Tom," she said, "sit down. Collect yourself." And she laughed. "With your leave, we'll forget all this. I was rather rude to you, I believe, twelve years ago: very disdainful and haughty,—Heaven knows why!—and you've had your revenge."

"Oh Morrie! Revenge!" The man looked broken and wan, and his eyes were moist.

"Let us call it poetic justice. But, mercy, see what a hostess I am! I've forgotten the tea! Stop there—I'll bring it. We've no maid."

She went, and came back in ten minutes, bearing a tray, of which he relieved her; and she poured out the tea, and gave him a cup, and sipped her own, calmly. All her old, brave reliance had returned to her; and she had smoothed her hair, and her eyes bore not a trace of their tears.

"My dear Tom," she began, "you've a very good heart,—you always did have,—and I see I've upset you. Oddly enough, I'm not half as ashamed as I should be. I feel that I owed it you somehow—I *was* such an arrant fool when I was a girl! And this thing makes a link between us—we'll always be friends. And now let's be sober and serious and talk over your affairs."

Mr. Chambers got up and held out his hand. "I think I had rather——"

"You needn't. I assure you it's quite all right now. My dear man, I did have a mad sort of notion—but I knew it was mad. If you leave me now without telling me I shall feel horribly ashamed. If you are, as I take you to be, my honest and faithful friend,—and I assure you I want a friend!—you will forget my hysterical folly, and sit down, and quietly discuss things." He paused for a moment, but her smile reassured him; he went back to his chair. "That's right! And now, which is it—Hilda or Maggie?"

Mr. Chambers turned very red. "Oh, I——" he murmured, and stopped.

"Come, come," urged Miss Marrisdaile, "you must tell me. I imagine it's Hilda?"

He nodded shamefacedly.

"She's the prettier of the two, of course. Does she know?"

He cleared his throat: "I fancy she has some idea——"

"Tell me, why did you want my advice or opinion?"

"Well, she's only twenty, and I'm forty-three. And I've a sort of suspicion, at times, that her mother—may be putting some pressure upon the girl."

Miss Marrisdaile toyed with her spoon. Hilda! Hilda's mother had married when her sister was little more than a child. She had fallen vaguely in love with a clerk in the City, and had led a discontented and reproachful existence ever since. There had never been

much sympathy between the sisters, and they met but rarely. And Hilda had inherited the feeble prettiness of her mother, the feeble intelligence too: she was vapid, foolish, caring only for dances, tennis, amusement, her one anxiety to "marry well." What sort of a wife would Hilda make for this honest, simple man? And her eyes signalled warning, but her woman's loyalty held her back: she could not spoil the girl's chance—her niece, after all. And besides, what would he require of his wife? She would give him all he would want, perhaps—Hilda, that little goose, with her pink and white face and her fat, foolish eyes! Oh men, men!

"What do you think?" asked Tom Chambers.

"How old are your children?"

"The boy's nine, and the girls seven and four. They're dear little things and very affectionate. But they need a mother, you know."

A mother! Oh, she would have loved them! She would have taken these orphans to her heart, her lonely heart that had nothing to care for!

"Hilda's a bit young, of course. You're twenty years older. That's the only objection I see—and it isn't a grave one."

Yes, the face, the face—that was all that they cared for! Hilda to educate children,—Hilda, who devoured novelettes and had not an idea in her head!

"Of course, she's young," said Mr. Chambers, "and I feel that it's just a bit foolish. But the fact is, you see——"

"You're in love with her?"

His sheepish look gave the answer. She crossed her hands on her lap and smiled. "Then marry her, my dear man. Be her master, that's all, and don't believe that because she's young, and you're not, she's making a magnificent sacrifice. The girl's all right. She needs guidance, of course, but you'll see to that. Marry her, by all means. You might do much worse. Let me see, I'll be your aunt." And she laughed.

"Is there anything I can do for you, Morrie?" There was a deep ring in his voice.

"Nothing, nothing, except—though I don't think I need ask it—never to let Hilda know."

"You need not ask it." He was reproachful.

"No, I feel that. Well"—she made a half-gesture, as though to imply that the conference was ended. But he did not rise.

"I'm afraid you're not happy," he said.

"Happy!" She smiled. "Don't take an advantage over me, Tom. I showed myself to you as I have never done before, or shall again, to a living soul. You asked me to marry you twelve years ago, and I wouldn't: and I'm an old maid,—a dreary, fusty old maid. That's all. I wrote poetry, and thought that was life. Two or three men

besides you made me offers—I talked of art, and scorned domesticity. I didn't know, then, that art meant living with Lucy Hartopp, and dining off tea and a boiled egg, and having nothing in this world to do or care for."

"Then your books——"

"Don't you see? I know nothing of life, of real men or women. When I was young and a fool I wrote about delirious love, and blinding passion, and fustian like that. I thought I was a genius. Yes, I did, you know—it's a fact. I was half-baked, as all women are who exclusively live by the brain. And I've got just what I deserved. That's all. It's not worth making a fuss about—and I don't, as a rule."

"You're still quite young—it's not too late——" He felt he had bungled, and blushed; she only smiled.

"Everything's too late for me, Tom. At least I've this much to be grateful for—my father left me a hundred a year, and I make another fifty or so by my writing."

"Fifty!" He stared his amazement.

"Did you think I was rolling in wealth? Oh, I can tell you, there are thousands of single women who'd give ten years of their life to be as well off as that! Lucy has a hundred a year too,—they gave her a pension,—and we club together. Of course, it's not luxury—but at least we have this place, which is home, of a sort, and need not pinch or scrape too much. Oh, things might be a good deal worse!"

"You don't keep a servant?"

"We've a woman who comes in the morning. It's comfortable enough. And Lucy's a very good cook—poor thing! it's all she can do."

"Can I help you in any way, Morrie?" he asked very gently.

"Not in the least, my dear friend. Go and propose to Hilda. I shall be at the wedding, of course."

"And you'll come to see us?"

"Oh, yes. Why not?" Go to see them! See Hilda there!

"Good-by then." He rose. "You'll remember—if there's anything I ever can do for you——"

"Oh, yes, I'll remember." She held out her hand.

He insisted. "Anything, anything. And see,"—he fished out a card,—“this is my business address. A word sent to me there——”

"That's nice of you, Tom. Oh, yes, if I ever should want you, or you me,—who knows?—we can count on each other. And I hope you'll be very happy. Oh, I hope it with all my heart!"

They stood for a moment and looked into each other's eyes; then shook hands, and he went, and she heard him fumbling for his hat and stick in the dark little hall; then the outer door closed, and Miss Marsdaile sat in her chair and stared at her empty teacup.

A CHRISTMAS FOLK-SONG

BY LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

THE little Jesus came to town;
 The wind blew up, the wind blew down;
 Out in the street the wind was bold;
 Now who would house Him from the cold?

Then opened wide a stable door,
 Fair were the rushes on the floor;
 The Ox put forth a hornèd head:
 "Come, little Lord, here make Thy bed."

Uprose the Sheep were folded near:
 "Thou Lamb of God, come, enter here."
 He entered there to rush and reed,
 Who was the Lamb of God indeed.

The little Jesus came to town;
 With ox and sheep He laid Him down;
 Peace to the byre, peace to the fold,
 For that they housed Him from the cold!



THE ADMONITION OF THE STAR

BY SUSIE M. BEST

I HEAR the Star of Bethlehem
 Proclaim this truth to me:
 "If in thy heart Christ hath no part,
 My light thou canst not see."

I hear the Star of Bethlehem
 In tones admonitive:
 "This light of mine on him must shine
 Who would in glory live."

I hear the Star of Bethlehem:
 "Renounce thy sins to-day;
 No longer blind, thy soul shall find
 The Life, the Truth, the Way."

I hear the Star of Bethlehem:
 "To him who wills 'tis given
 That he may be eternally
 Co-heir with Christ in Heaven."

“HIS WIFE”

By Tryntje Dubois



MRS. HARLON held the pistol in her hand and examined its mechanism with an absent-minded frown. The loads lay in a glass of water on the table beside her; presently she picked them up in her fingers, dried them on her handkerchief, replaced them in the empty chambers of the revolver, and, crossing the room, laid it on the chimney-piece.

Then she sank her hands deep in the wide pockets of her Empire dressing-gown, compressed her lips for an instant, sighed heavily, and rung the bell. To the responding servant she said briefly,—

“I want to speak to your master;” and then she turned towards the window and waited while the man went through the many corridors that lay between the private suite of his master and mistress and the billiard-room, where all the men of the party were making a jolly end to a rainy day.

A telegram had just come for Hughes, summoning him to town by the midnight express. Chamberlaine, who had arrived late and had to share his friend's apartment, was so overjoyed at the prospect of a whole bed to himself that he offered to drive him across country to the train. He regretted the offer directly he had made it, but Hughes had exhibited so much pleasure in his acceptance that it seemed impossible to withdraw. While they were discussing the matter the man came in with Mrs. Harlon's message. There wasn't a fellow present who would not have been less surprised if their hostess had sent for himself—Mrs. Harlon being “that kind of woman.” Harlon flushed with a mixture of importance and pleasure and quitted the room at once. After he was gone all the men but Hughes laughed: Hughes didn't laugh because he was scribbling an order to send to the stables.

Then Chamberlaine became sober all of a sudden. “I don't believe I'll go, after all,” he said, “it's raining harder than ever.”

Hughes walked across to the bell-rope.

“Don't go back on a friend, Billy,” he said as he rang, “I need you to-night.”

Harlon, as he hurried along the halls, wondered what his wife wanted. He wasn't the sort of husband whose presence is frequently demanded. He was that species of innocuous male who is afraid of his own mounts, rarely understands the talk at his own table, and never

makes the acquaintance of the woman he marries. He felt very important to be summoned like that; he didn't know just why, but it made him feel good, it made him feel as if he were a person of consequence, and he decided that the next time a question was to be settled he would be very decided and have his own way.

Then he opened the door of the boudoir and saw her sitting there alone by the fire, and somehow all his independent ideas deserted him, and he recoiled abruptly into his usual deferential attitude towards the creature who contemplated the flames and agitated her gilded slipper with an air of haughtiness unparalleled.

"You—you sent for me."

She turned and looked towards the voice, then rose up and stood there, resting her hand on the chair-back. Her gown of velvet hung in great, golden folds around her, and the firelight outlined the splendor of her hair and throat and form. She was a strikingly beautiful woman—the sort of woman who wisely chooses to marry a man both moral and dense. She stood there now, measuring him and measuring herself, and then, at last, she spoke,—

"I sent for you because I wanted to know how much courage and how much greatness of character you possess."

Harlon, being masculine, naturally was as completely sure of the possession of every desirable attribute as he was unaware that his ears stood out and his legs were bowed.

"Anything you want, Ada," he said, "you know you can have."

As he spoke he could hear that his words did not sound quite up to the occasion, although it must be admitted that as a general rule none could be better suited to alleviate any female woes, be their cause great or small.

Mrs. Harlon levelled her big, glorious eyes upon him and smiled.

"Thank you," she said. "I have made up my mind that the only thing to do is to confess the whole to you."

Harlon looked frightened.

"My—my dear," he stammered—and then his legs trembled so that he had to sit down.

Mrs. Harlon came towards him and knelt at his feet, leaning her crossed wrists upon his knees; his heart beat so hard that she could feel the throbbing in his legs.

"It's Mr. Chamberlaine!" she announced without any further preparation, and then she buried her face in her hands and began to sob violently.

Harlon recoiled. He was a good man, but he did read the papers enough to understand his apparent situation.

"Ada," he said, and stopped just short of "my dear," and shook violently with a nervous chill.

"I haven't done anything wrong," said the weeping wife, continuing to hide her face.

"I never did think much of Chamberlaine," said Harlon, trying to recover his equanimity and failing utterly.

"You must be very brave," she whispered.

"I'll defend you with my life," he answered, and took out his handkerchief to wipe his forehead,—*"tell me all."*

"I knew him before I was married," she went on. "I used to write to him. He has all my letters, and none of them are dated." She began to cry very hard indeed. "Do you know what he said to-day?—that he would bring them all to me to-night if—if——"

"The villain!" said Harlon with energy.

"He has been threatening me for a year, and I have been almost crazy——"

She paused and lifted her beautiful, tear-stained face up to his.

"Ah, my husband, *are* you magnanimous enough to forgive me, to stay here and meet him, and then to force him to surrender the letters?"

Harlon gasped. The memory of Chamberlaine rose up before him like that of some evil genius.

"Oh Ada," he said, "can't I write him a note?"

Mrs. Harlon started to her feet and crossed the room to the mantel.

"He will be here in ten minutes," she cried hastily. "See! Here is a pistol. He will be unarmed and totally unsuspecting. You must take him by surprise, and then overcome him. I know you can do it." She lifted the pistol and showed it to him with a smile.

"My hero!" she murmured, and left the room.

The door had not closed behind her when Harlon precipitated himself upon the pistol, seized it gingerly, carried it to the window, and threw the loads out on the damp grass below.

"There might have been an awful accident," he said, with pale lips. Then he put the pistol back on the mantel, turned out the light, and sat down to spend the worst minutes he had ever known. He remembered Chamberlaine's attempt to get out of driving Hughes to the train. Forgotten his project, eh!—the villain!

The husband tried to grit his teeth, but they persisted in chattering instead; then he heard a stealthy tread in the hall, and the cold beads of perspiration started out all over him. He pressed the button with his shaking hand and the room was suddenly illumined.

In the midst of the glare Chamberlaine stood bewildered. He had on a mackintosh and carried an umbrella. The expression on his face so nearly approached fright that Harlon felt suddenly courageous and advanced boldly.

"I know all," he said impressively,—*"all."*

Chamberlaine was close to the door. He said, "There's some mistake," and turned to go.

Then all the pent-up fury which the inoffensive husband of a flirtatious wife may accumulate during eight or ten years of married life suddenly boiled up in the veins of Harlon and led him to spring upon his guest. But the latter was slippery to catch on account of the mackintosh, and as he jumped backward he handled his umbrella so neatly and dexterously that his host paused in his onslaught and backed towards the mantel. The next minute the revolver-barrels gleamed on the scene.

Chamberlaine's whole attitude altered at once.

"You're mad!" he said coolly, and with incredible speed and dexterity he rushed upon the other man, knocked the weapon out of his hand, threw him to the ground, and pinned him there, helpless.

"Now kindly explain?" he said as he looked quietly down on his panting host. "Are you out of your mind?—or what is it?"

"You villain!" gurgled Harlon, "you come into my house by invitation and then try to barter my wife's honor against her girlhood's folly."

"Go on," said Chamberlaine, "I want to know exactly what I am supposed to be committing to-night."

"I want those letters. She has told me the whole story."

"Whose letters?"

"Her letters."

"She never wrote me a letter in her life."

"What!"

"I say she never wrote me a letter in her life."

"What did you threaten her with, then?"

"I never threatened her. What should I threaten your wife for?"

"What did you come here for, then?"

"Hughes told me to wait here for him. I was to have driven him to the train."

As he spoke Chamberlaine loosed his grip and rose to his feet. Harlon rose too.

"Where is Hughes now?" he asked.

"I suppose he's gone. He had to make the fast express. He wouldn't have waited for me when I didn't come—he isn't that kind, you know."

The two men looked at each other, and the look grew into a stare, and the stare bred a sort of understanding.

"Hughes sent you here," said Harlon very slowly, "and my wife sent me."

"I occupy the room with Hughes," said Chamberlaine.

"And I——"

Harlon stopped.

Across the stillness of the wet night sounded the whistle of the fast express.

A BALLAD OF THE NATIVITY

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

NOW it was Mary dreamed this dream,
Ere yet her Child was born
In that poor place in Bethlehem,
In that poor stall forlorn,
Before the dark of night had fled
And given place to morn.

She fell asleep and dreamed this dream
That filled her heart with fear—
That she had died that One might live
Whose life was very dear,
And that she never saw His face
Or dried His earliest tear.

She dreamed that her own life went out—
Her life divinely sweet—
Ere she could press His little hands
Or kiss His little feet,
Or know the bliss that was to make
Her womanhood complete.

She dreamed she died before she knew
The trembling joy to say,
“I am a mother, I whose life
So bleak was yesterday;
I know at last that perfect hour
For which all women pray.”

Oh, strangely came this dream to her,
This dream of utter woe,
While through the dark Judean night,
Above the wastes of snow,
A star flamed in the midnight heaven
And set the East aglow.

And ere the pallid dawn had come
To break her sacred rest,
She wakened with a startled moan
And tears the bitterest,
And lo! she felt two little hands
Clasped close upon her breast!

THE PASTRY-KNIFE PASS- OVER

By Mary and Rosalie Dawson



FROM MISS DOROTHY BROOKS TO MRS. JOSEPH L. LUKENS.

NEW YORK, December 23.

DEAR MINNIE: I'm really ashamed to think what a bad correspondent I've been lately. The worst of it is that I haven't the least shadow of an excuse—just pure laziness. I haven't been going round much, or doing anything in particular, that I can remember. However, even my abominable laziness couldn't let this season go by without writing to wish you a happy Christmas and all possible good-luck for the coming year.

Yesterday I forwarded you a remembrance in the shape of a silver pastry-knife. I hope a pastry-cutter can't cut friendship. If it can, you must send me a penny. How is my godchild, and what bright things has she been saying lately? I've no news of any kind to make this letter interesting, but I hope you'll forgive my long silence and write soon.

By the way, you've heard, haven't you, that my engagement to Mr. Metcalf is broken? We came to a mutual decision that it was a mistake, after all, and released each other some days ago.

Please give Joe my best wishes for the season. As ever, lovingly yours,

DOROTHY.

FROM MRS. JOSEPH L. LUKENS TO MISS ISADORA HUNTER.

PHILADELPHIA, December 25.

DEAREST ISADORA: Thank you so much for the cake-dish. It was just what I needed. It matched my Dresden tea-set so beautifully that I know you must have had that in mind when you picked it out, and thought makes a gift doubly appreciated.

You see, I remembered that you were a housekeeper too this year, and sent you something practical—a silver pastry-cutter. I hope you will find it useful, and that a pastry-knife can't cut friendship. If it can, you must send me a penny.

How is your housekeeping coming on up to date? I was so glad to hear that you were suited at last in Miss O'Rourke. As I mentioned in

my note, we found her cooking perfection itself. But oh, my dear, the expense! She wanted all the implements and conveniences they had in the cooking-school. Joe said he didn't mind addressing his cook as "Miss," but if we didn't want to spend every penny of his income on pots, pans, and improvements, we'd have to make up our minds to call a halt somewhere. He was convinced there never would be anything resembling peace in the house until we tore out the entire rear part of the building and rebuilt it according to her ideas.

So I decided to call a halt, and made up my mind to refuse the very next thing she asked for. It happened to be a patent mayonnaise mixer. Miss O'R. seemed to think it was a vital necessity, but I assured her that we'd managed to exist eight years without it, and that I'd no idea of adding further to my kitchen outfit at present. She looked at me witheringly, as if I were Mrs. Ham, Shem, or Japhet housekeeping in an ark, and gave me notice on the spot.

By the way, you remember Dorothy Brooks, who was visiting me last spring, don't you? We were all so much interested in her love-affair with that good-looking Mr. Metcalf. I think I told you that they became engaged in the fall. Well, Dot has written me that it's all off. Poor child, she did her best to write casually about it—said they'd agreed mutually that it was all a mistake. But I know Dot too well to be deceived by such unnatural calmness. She's one of those loyal, steadfast natures that doesn't change in an hour or a day. There's not a strain of fickleness in her character, so I feel positive the change must have been on his side.

I always took credit to myself for that match, because they were first introduced at our house. He was visiting in Philadelphia at the time—staying with some elderly relations of his.

I wonder if you know the romantic way they first met. She was on a runaway trolley and it was Mr. Metcalf who saved the situation, averting a panic. He calmed the women passengers by his presence of mind and persuaded them not to jump, so that when they finally got the brakes to work not a soul was injured.

Dot came home that afternoon terribly excited and gave us a most glowing description of the plucky stranger, his wonderful influence over the women in the car, and all that sort of thing. From her account he was a sort of combination of Hercules and Adonis in a tweed suit. She said among other things that he was so "magnetically masterful" that when he smiled any woman in the car would have obeyed him if convinced she was going to certain destruction in doing it.

Of course, she hadn't the least idea who he was, or that she'd ever see him again, so when he turned up that evening at dinner and she recognized him as her hero Joe was in his glory. He insisted on repeating everything she had said about Mr. M. before the whole tableful

of people. Of course, Dot was horribly embarrassed. She sat there blushing and protesting in a low voice. Her blushes were very becoming, though, and, besides, she had on a stunning imported gown.

Mr. Metcalf could hardly take his eyes off her. Joe kept up his allusions to magnetically masterful men all evening, and Dot continued to blush, and altogether it was the prettiest little beginning for a romance. I shall never be able to forgive Howard for bringing it all to nothing.

Well, my dear, be sure to answer this long letter soon. If I don't see you before the New Year I wish you a very happy one. Yours very affectionately,

MINNIE LUKENS.

P. S.—The children are all well and send love. Ada and Tony Fletcher have fallen out after three months of "crush." It appears he's been devoting too much attention to some little girl at the dancing-class. Her father was trying to tease Ada about him the other evening. To our great amusement she tossed her head and said, with an air of great indifference, "Tony! Oh, he has a new *inflame* now."

And she is only seven. I shall be having her heart-affairs to worry me next.

FROM MISS ISADORA HUNTER TO MRS. RODNEY SKIPWITH JONES.

PHILADELPHIA, January 2.

MY DEAR GEORGINA: No doubt you are wondering why I have not written to express to you my thanks for the beautiful inkwell, which reached me on Xmas morning and was deeply appreciated.

To tell the truth, I have been so immersed in housekeeping that I really seem to have time left for nothing else. Mother, as perhaps you know, is South for her health, and the burden of household cares has descended for the first time on my shoulders. For the first time, also, I learn how shamefully ignorant of such things I am. But I am going into the subject thoroughly at present, and hope ere long to be conversant with all branches of domestic science. I attend Mrs. Flower's cooking-class every morning from ten to twelve, and I have also entered upon a course of household economics which is held three afternoons a week. These, in connection with the practical care of the house, keep every hour occupied.

You've no idea, Georgina, what a difficult time I had to procure a capable cook. It is only recently that I succeeded in getting a person of the type I wanted. She's a graduate of two cooking-schools and is thoroughly up in modern methods. Miss O'Rourke was with Minnie Lukens for a short while before she came to me. You've heard me speak of Minnie. Well, she—that is, Miss O'Rourke—gave me a most surprising account of the Lukens' kitchen. She said that both furnish-

ings and utensils were absolutely archaic. She had the greatest difficulty in persuading them to purchase anything in the least modern. In fact, Minnie herself admitted to me that she let Miss O'Rourke go rather than buy a patent mayonnaise mixer. It is astonishing how unprogressive some women can be in an era of development like this.

By the way, I think you know Dorothy Brooks. Have you heard that her engagement to Mr. Metcalf is broken? I feel so sorry for her. Nevertheless, I can't really blame him as severely as some people seem to do for jilting her. I always was of the opinion that he was, as Francis would express it, roped into it. Minnie Lukens and that idiotic husband of hers, between them, fairly threw the girl at his head.

I remember being at the Southburys' dance a couple of evenings after that "romantic" meeting of theirs. The way they all acted about it on that occasion was inexpressibly foolish. It seemed that Mr. Metcalf had previously declared he was not going to the dance, and afterwards, as any man might, had changed his mind at the last minute. Minnie insisted that it was because he had learned suddenly that Dorothy was to be there, and Dot, as they call her, looked so absurdly conscious that the poor fellow, out of mere politeness, was obliged to show her considerable attention.

Of course, she's a very nice girl in many ways. Some people consider her pretty, but to me her face lacks character. I should judge her to be the sort of girl that attracts men at first but cannot hold them for any length of time. I feel very sorry about it all. They say that she, poor thing! feels dreadfully.

Though I've not written to you for so long, Georgina, you have not been out of mind with me. My little Christmas souvenir, I am afraid, may not have reached you on the day for which it was intended. We were in all the chaos resulting from a set of new maids at the time, and I was a little late in sending it. I hope a pastry-knife cannot cut friendship. If it can, you must send me a penny. Again wishing you a great deal of happiness during the New Year, I remain, faithfully your friend,

ISADORA HUNTER.

FROM MRS. RODNEY SKIPWITH JONES TO MISS EDNA BURNS.

NEW YORK, January 8.

DEAR OLD ED.: The darling lace handky you sent me reached me on Christmas Day and I'm reciprocating, though I fear somewhat tardily, with a silver pastry-knife. Don't be frightened. A pastry-knife can't cut friendship; or, if it can, you must send me a penny. You see, in view of your being a housekeeper-elect, I chose something practical. By the way, when is the great event to come off? Take my advice, child, and lay in all the diamonds and jewelry you can beforehand.

You'll never get a chance at such things afterwards. In your present roseate state of mind this may seem pessimistic, but take the warning of One Who Knows.

You ask why I've not written? Well, I will the tale unfold. I've been in the height of the fashion for once—had the grippe. I'm still feeling as disjointed and boneless as a goop.

My grippe will explain to you why the little gift comes so late. I commissioned Rodney to buy and send the things to people who mightn't understand, but I felt I could keep my intimates waiting till I was on my legs again. I wish now I'd kept everybody waiting. Since the letters of thanks (?) have been coming in and I've been finding out what his selections were my hair is gradually growing gray. One would think any man would know better than to send a woman with Aunt Hannah's prohibition sentiments a liqueur set. It's good-by to that little legacy, I suppose.

You'll be able to judge how shaky I still feel when you hear that I've not even been able to get over to see poor Dot Brooks. Did you know that her engagement to Howard Metcalf is broken? They say she's simply broken-hearted over it. I know he's a connection of yours by marriage, but as you've never met, I sha'n't hesitate to speak my mind. Dot only wrote me the merest line about it. From what I've heard elsewhere, though, I understand that he simply jilted her, and that his Lordship didn't give himself any great trouble in the matter of explanations either.

Of course, Dot wasn't Howard's first by any manner of means. He's been gone on half a dozen girls at different periods of his career, but since it had gotten as far as an engagement this time, we thought he was in earnest at last.

Deary me! Never shall I forget his face that evening at Foxs' last October, when young Cranston, the author, announced that he'd drawn his new historical-novel heroine from Dot. Howard was insanelly jealous in a twinkling. He began at once upon a scathing arraignment of historical-romance literature in general and particular. If Emma Fox and I hadn't thrown ourselves into the breach and behaved like a vaudeville sketch team to carry it off, the entire evening would have been spoiled. As it was I half expected to find poor Cranston's corpse in the vestibule afterwards.

Of course, neither Cranston nor anybody else knew they were engaged at the time. Dot had the good sense to prevent probable murders by announcing it soon afterwards.

Apropos of nothing! You know Isadora Hunter, don't you? I remember your telling me that you met her somewhere and that she made you think of an educated cat. Just between ourselves, my dearie, —although Isadora and I are old friends,—I considered that sentence a trifle descriptive.

Well, Mrs. Hunter has gone South for the winter to recuperate. (Rodney says anyone who has put up with Isadora for twenty-six years has earned a rest.) Isa. is housekeeper pro tem. She seems to have gone in for domestic economy with just the same bang she took up Browning, golf, et cætera. From what I gather, with just as little common-sense too. My dear, I heard that they had twenty-four different maids in that house in one week. Don't you envy her unhappy father and brother? Well, there's one consolation for them, poor things! it won't last long.

Now, do write soon, Ed., telling me all about yourself and Jim. Devotedly yours,

GEORGIE.

P. S.—Rodney sends love and a kiss.

FROM MISS EDNA BURNS TO MRS. WALTER TRAVERS JOHNSON.

BALTIMORE, January 12.

DEAR AUNTY: I am writing this in time to *reach* you and *congratulate* you on your *silver wedding* anniversary. Many, many happy returns to you and *Uncle Walter*. Give uncle my *best love* and *twenty-five hugs*.

Thank you ever and *ever* so much for the set of *table-linen*. As you *advise*, I'll begin to hem them *right away*. It's true, as you say, that later on, when Jim and I decide upon the *exact date*, there will be so many things to attend to that I won't have time for them.

And this *reminds* me to tell you about *Howard Metcalf*. From what *you* and *other people* have told me about him I always thought I'd like to know him. Now, I think he must be a *perfect pig*, and I'm *so glad* I never met him. You must have heard, aunty, that his engagement to that *Miss Brooks* is *broken*. Perhaps he didn't tell you, though, that he *simply jilted her*. Why, a friend of hers told me that when the poor girl *begged* him for an *explanation* he just walked off without giving her one, and she's *perfectly* sick about it. Of course, I've never met her *myself*, but *they say* she's a *perfectly lovely* girl, and I don't see how any *man* could treat her so. Jim says what he needs is *kicking*, and I think so too. I know how *dreadfully* I'd feel if *Jim* treated *me* that way. I never dreamed any member of *uncle's family* could be that sort of a fellow. Perhaps I shouldn't have told you, but I'm just *full of it*, and, anyhow, if he's that kind of a *creature*, you might as well know.

Mother is writing by *this mail*. *The rest* are all well. Good-by for the *present*. With *lots of love* from your *affectionate niece*,

EDNA.

P. S.—I am sending you and uncle a little remembrance for your anniversary. It's a silver pastry-cutter, and I hope you'll like it. A

pastry-knife can't cut friendship, can it? If it can, you must send me a penny.

FROM MRS. WALTER TRAVERS JOHNSON TO MISS DOROTHY BROOKS.

PHILADELPHIA, February 1.

MY DEAR DOROTHY: Your note announcing your impending marriage afforded me much pleasure. I am gratified that I was in any way instrumental in bringing about a reconciliation between you and Howard. You ask how I could possibly have told that you were secretly regretting the misunderstanding which resulted in the breaking of your engagement. The explanation is simple. Just previous to writing to Howard I heard what now appears—from his letter and yours—to be an entirely unfounded story to the effect that he had broken the engagement again. ^{As} your wishes. I ^{was} given to understand that you were grieving over the estrangement. ^{As} Howard has no mother, and as I know him to be a warm-hearted though thoughtless boy, I informed him at once of what I had heard. I impressed it upon him that his conduct had caused you great unhappiness; that your friends feared even illness might result, and that it was clearly his duty to go to you at once; to do everything in his power to renew the engagement. So, you see, I must disclaim all power of mental telepathy.

I will ask you, Dorothy, to communicate this to Howard, as I am at present too much occupied to write to him, and he was anxious to know "what I thought he had been guilty of."

I am indeed glad that the report was a mistaken one. However, the experience will be a lesson in forbearance to you both—a most necessary one for young people beginning wedded life.

In one way at least you are starting out right. It gave me great pleasure to hear that you were to be married quietly. To my mind there is entirely too much orchestra and orange-blossom to modern weddings. The money expended upon these frivolities would much better be put away in bank against a rainy day.

It is very kind of you to urge me to be present on the fifteenth, but I fear that the east winds of February will prevent my doing so. I am sending, with my best wishes for you and Howard, a little wedding-gift in the form of a silver pastry-cutter. I trust it will be serviceable. If you are afraid that a pastry-knife will cut friendship, you must send me a penny. ^{Yours} Your loving (future) aunt,

REBECCA JOHNSON.



WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN GOVERNMENT BONDS PAYING 21% ?

Investors buy government bonds that pay only 2 per cent. interest because they are absolutely safe, although only millionaires can afford to take 2 per cent. for their money. If the same investors could place their money where it would be equally safe and at the same time draw 21 per cent. dividends it would seem like folly to let the opportunity pass. When a gold mine is mentioned as a safe investment the average person appears skeptical (probably from lack of definite knowledge), and yet a good gold mine properly managed is as safe as a government bond and a hundred times more profitable. We speak of actual gold mines, not prospects or ventures. Let us prove it to you.

The Mt. Jefferson Mines Consolidated owns one of the greatest gold mines in California. It is developed by over one mile of underground workings. It has produced nearly \$500,000. There are 150,000 tons of \$10 ore blocked out. The mine is estimated to contain about 7,000,000 tons of ore. Some of it assays \$500.00 per ton. An eighty-ton mill is running day and night pounding out the gold from which the Company is paying dividends at the rate of 21 per cent. per annum. Stockholders are protected by a special Trust Fund which makes a loss impossible. 21 per cent. on an absolutely safe investment in any other industry would be considered remarkable; in gold mining it is very ordinary. Naturally the management of the Mt. Jefferson is not contented with the present yield from a mine containing so vast a body of ore, and it has arranged to increase the milling capacity to 300 tons daily. Far greater dividends will then be paid. Wisely enough it prefers, out of consideration to present stockholders, to sell treasury stock for this purpose rather than use all the earnings of the mine and so suspend dividend paying. This stock is now offered at a low figure. According to the best expert opinion it will double in value many times, and the dividends will continue for a life time.

Under these circumstances this stock is as safe as government bonds and a hundred times more profitable. Thousands of investors have longed for the chance to participate in the immense profits of legitimate mining when they could do so without assuming any risk. This chance is now open. Will you be among the fortunate ones to grasp it?

We have issued a beautifully illustrated prospectus giving complete details of this great enterprise; also a valuable booklet of information on the mining industry, which we will be pleased to send you free upon request. It will cost you nothing to investigate. It may mean a fortune for you.

A. L. WISNER & CO. (Inc.) BANKERS, 32 Broadway, New York

Go West to the Ocean



California's summer climate is finest in the world.

Cool Trip on the Santa Fe.

Surf-bathing—ocean breezes—snow-capped Sierras.

You can buy a combination round-trip ticket to San Diego this summer—including railroad and Pullman fare, meals en route, one day at Grand Canyon, and two weeks' board and lodging at Coronado Tent City—at a very low price.

Tent City is a popular Southern California summer seaside resort.

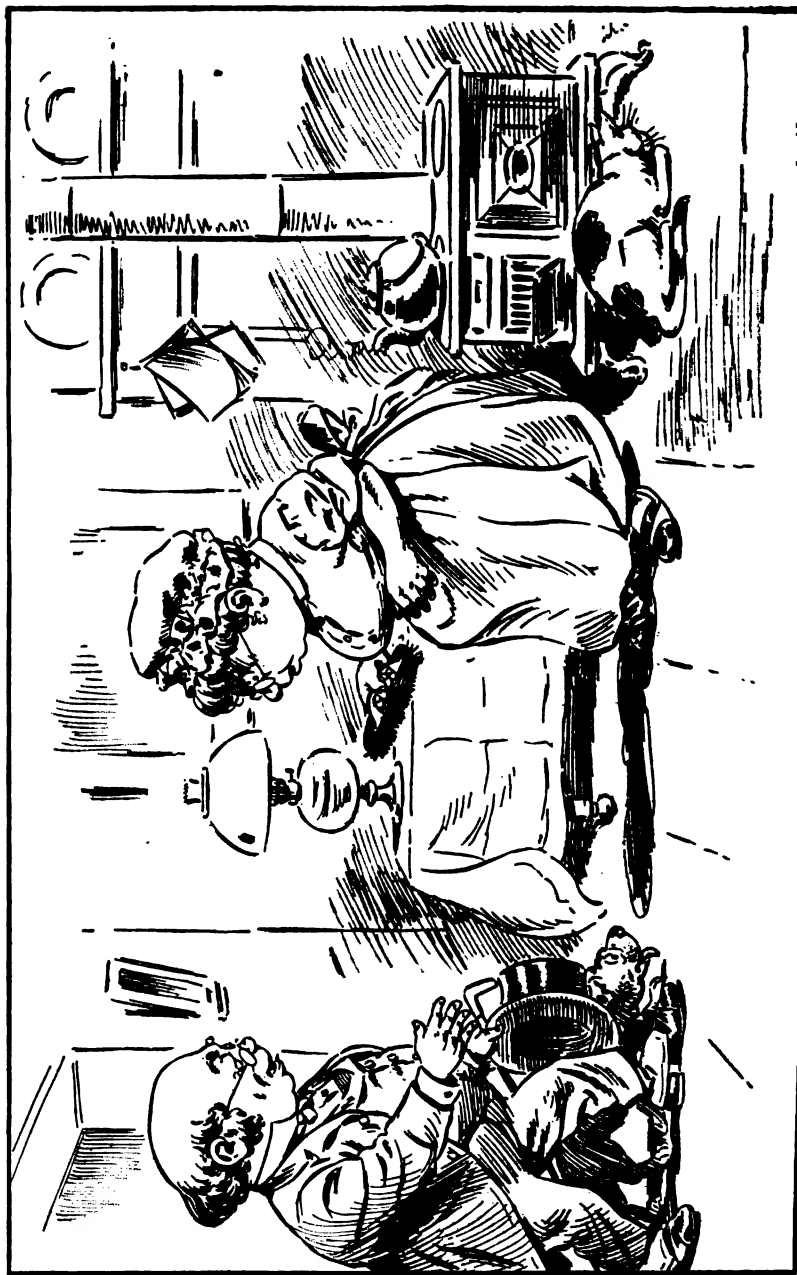
For full particulars, address

Gen. Pass. Office, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, Chicago.

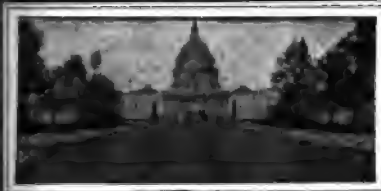
Santa Fe All the Way

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VISIT AUNT POLLY.

I.



The AL-VISTA



**A PERFECT "SNAP"
WHY?—BECAUSE.**

You can take the whole view with one snap, or, with some models, stop the lens at five different places, and thus make five different widths of pictures, all depending on just how much of the view you wish. These are features no other camera possesses.

OUR CO-OPERATIVE PLAN

We now send you any camera described in our catalogue upon a small payment being made. The remainder you may pay in monthly instalments while you are using the camera. Write us for full information about this.

MULTISCOPE & FILM CO.

1206 Jefferson Street, BURLINGTON, WIS.

Lens Supremacy

Everywhere Acknowledged

Catalog
Free



BAUSCH & LOMB,
Lenses & Shutters

\$500,000 offered for photos made with them

Rochester, N.Y.

NEW YORK BOSTON CHICAGO

1903 KORONAS

Represent Top-Notch in the Camera-BUILDER'S Art



A New
Camera



KORONA-ROYAL



The Perfect
Camera

"What do you mix your paints with?" asked the Wag of the celebrated artist. "With brains, sir," replied the latter.

It's the Best Material, the Most Expert Labor, Nineteen Years' Experience—and BRAINS that put KORONA CONSTRUCTION in a class by itself.



(To be continued in the 1903 Korona Catalogue. Send for it.)

**Gundlach-Manhattan
Optical Co.**

758 South Clinton Ave.
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VIST AUNT POLLY.—Continued.

II.



Compactness
Ease of operation
Perfect alignment
Visible writing
Ball bearing

Five Keys to Business Success



The Bar-Lock Typewriter

has every advantage possessed by any other machine, and several improvements to be found nowhere else. Write for catalogue.

Columbia Typewriter Mfg. Co.
 43 West 116th St., NEW YORK



The HAMMOND

the only Typewriter which enables one to write, on the same machine, twenty-six languages over one hundred styles of type.

No other typewriter possesses, in as high a degree, any one of the following three essential features

SPEED EASE OF OPERATION
EXCELLENCE OF WORK

Writing Machine of Universal Adaptability

THE HAMMOND TYPEWRITER CO.

Factory and General Offices, both in both Sts. East River

NEW YORK, N. Y.

Branch Offices in Principal Cities. Representatives everywhere.

TYPEWRITERS ALL MAKES

All the Standard machines **SOLD or RENTED ANYWHERE** at **HALF MANUFACTURERS' PRICES**. Shipped with privilege of examination. Send for Catalogue.

TYPEWRITER EMPORIUM, 204 La Salle St., CHICAGO.

IN BUSINESS for yourself; stop working for others. We start you in profit. Mail-Order business at your home. Pleasant work; use profits; unlimited possibilities. Full information **COMP. FRANKLIN HOWARD CO., Denver, Colorado.**

PATENTS PROMPTLY SECURED. Terms moderate. Write for book on patents and any information. **Josiah L. A. J. Weidemann, Jr., Patent Atty., Washington, D. C.**

SOFTENED WITH SORE EYES DR. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER



THE DENSMORE

Adopted as Official Typewriter

BY THE

WORLD'S FAIR
St. Louis.

Head Office: 309 Broadway, New York.

THE LOCKE ADDER

Only \$5

Buy a Locke Adder to save your brain

CAPACITY 999,999,999

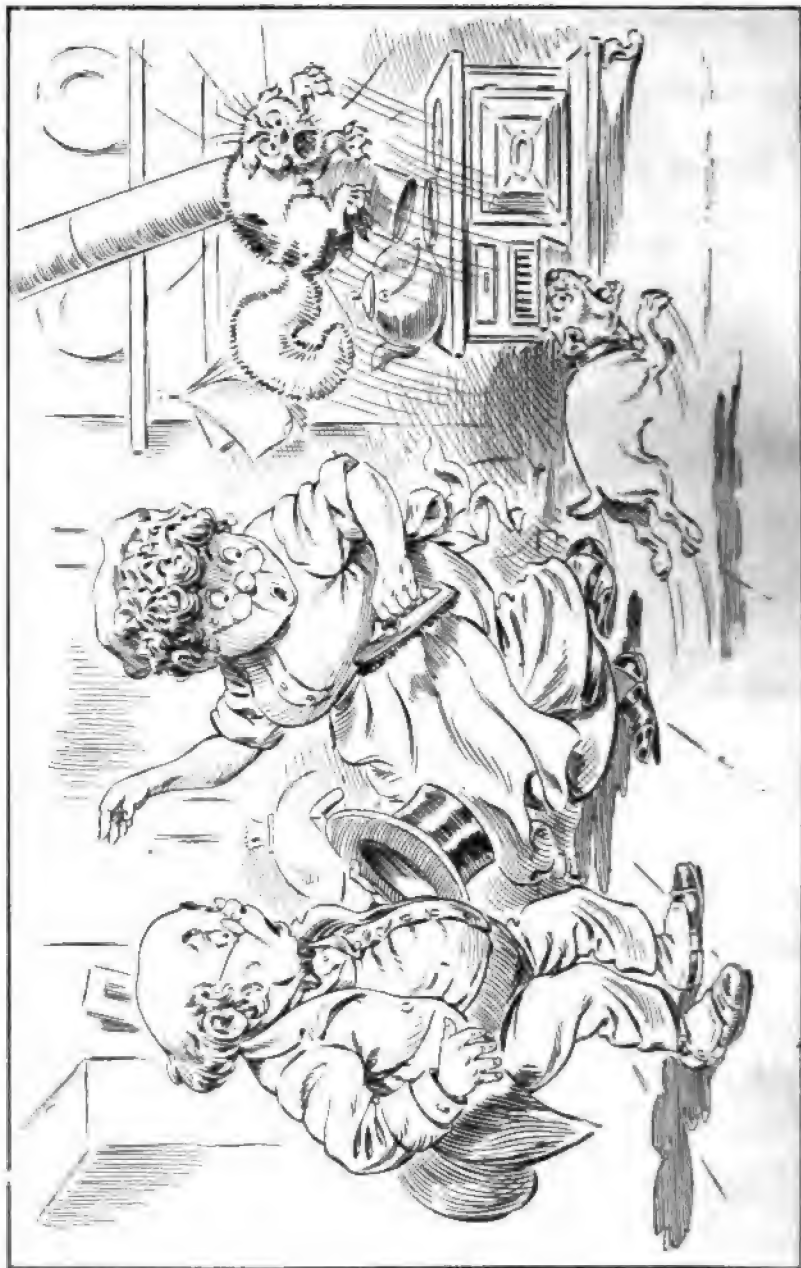
Fastest, simplest, handiest, most practical and durable, low-priced calculating machine. Adds, Subtracts, Multiplies, Divides. Cannot make mistakes. Computes nine columns simultaneously. Saves time, labor, brain, and will last a lifetime.

"One should be in every business office."—Joe Lee Jameson, State Revenue Agent, Austin, Texas.
 "It is worth its weight in gold."—Chas. W. Thompson, Spec'l Agt. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Boston, Mass.

Price \$5.00, prepaid in U. S. Booklet free. Agents wanted.
C. E. LOCKE MFG CO., 51 Walnut St., Kensett, Iowa.

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VISIT AUNT POLLY.—Continued.

III.





F.P.C. WAX

Ride a good horse to Banbury Cross.
To give little lady a ride:
Oh the road's a hot iron
With F.P.C. waxed—
So the dear little lady can slide.

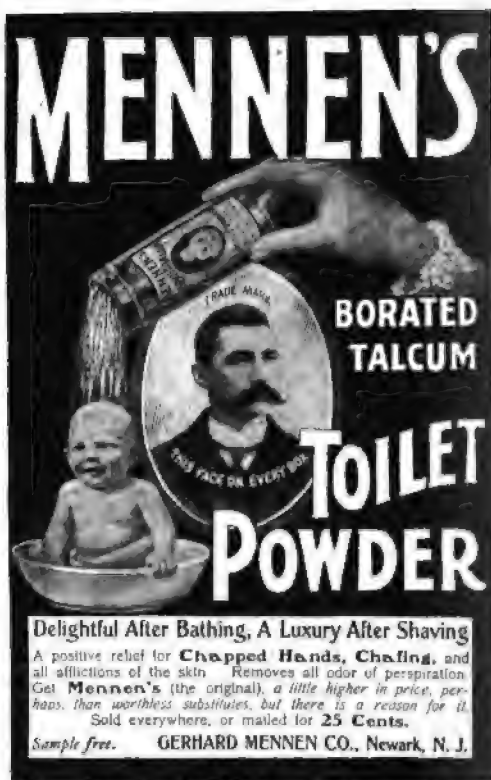
5 CENTS

The only wax that keeps the
irons Smooth and Clean.

FREE A Chinarette Painting Set,
tray, brush and colors, to every pur-
chaser of five sticks of F. P. C. Wax.

Send five trade-marks taken from
the sticks to

FLAME-PROOF CO., New York City.



MENNEN'S

BORATED TALCUM

TOILET POWDER

Delightful After Bathing, A Luxury After Shaving
A positive relief for **Chapped Hands, Chafing,** and
all afflictions of the skin. Removes all odor of perspiration.
Get **Mennen's** (the original), a little higher in price, per-
haps, than worthless substitutes, but there is a reason for it.
Sold everywhere, or mailed for **25 Cents.**
Sample free. **GERHARD MENNEN CO., Newark, N. J.**

If use **Bilious**



It prevents bilious attacks by keeping the
stomach clean and liver active.

"It's good for children, too."

At Druggists, 50c, and \$1.00, or by mail from
The Tarrant Co., 21 Jay Street, New York.
Business Established 1834.



DENTACURA
TOOTH-PASTE

IS THE BEST

Commended by 3000 Dentists.
Cleans the teeth and destroys harm-
ful bacteria, thus retarding decay
and preserving the teeth. Be sure
you get Dentacura. Avoid substi-
tutes. At druggists, 75 cents, or
sent direct on receipt of price.

Made only by the
Dentacura Company, Newark, N. J., U. S. A.

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VISIT AUNT POLLY.—Continued.
IV.





"Aphridite"
SUMMER WEAR

15 cents,
2 for
25 cents

The best
Collars yet
designed
are
**"LITTLE
INDIAN"**
make

For sale at Furnishing Stores

See that this
trade-mark is on



all Collars and
Cuffs you buy

We will send picture No. 10, for four
cents in stamps, with small Catalogue.

H. C. CURTIS & Co.
425 RIVER ST., TROY, N. Y.

SAVES HOSIERY

NEVER SLIPS, TEARS
NOR UNFASTENS
Every Pair
Warranted

The
Velvet Grip

Sample
pair
by
mail,
25c.

CUSHION
BUTTON

HOSE SUPPORTER

If your Dealer does not sell you this
Supporter he does not sell the Best

Every Clasp has the name
Stamped on the Metal Loop

GEORGE FROST CO., Makers, Boston, Mass.



COLORADO

The delightful country of health-giving,
light, dry air and inspiring scenery is the
ideal place to spend your

Summer Vacation

A country perfectly suited for either
rest, recreation or sport, abounding in good
hotels and boarding places adapted to any
man's means. It is an inexpensive place
to visit and the trip requires but one night
en route from Chicago via the

CHICAGO, UNION PACIFIC AND NORTH-WESTERN LINE.

An Illustrated Booklet and other interest-
ing printed matter about Colorado will be
sent free to all persons addressing

W. B. KNISKERN,
Passenger Traffic Manager C. & N.-W. Ry.,
22 Fifth Ave., CHICAGO.

Jaeger

PURE WOOL

Protects
Against
Temperature Changes.

The Standard Sanitary Underwear for Men, Women and Children.

Endorsed by Leading Physicians.

Also various **JAEGER** Novelties and
Specialties.

Don't forget that the Best is the Cheap-
est and that the First Wealth is Health.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE.

DR. JAEGER & W. S. CO.'S OWN STORES.

NEW YORK: 16 West 23d St.; 155-157 Broadway.
BROOKLYN: 504 Fulton Street.
BOSTON: 230-232 Boylston Street.
PHILADELPHIA: 1510 Chestnut Street.
CHICAGO: 82 State Street.

AGENTS IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES.

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VISIT AUNT POLLY.—Continued.

V.





THE SECRET OF A GOOD COMPLEXION

ALL WOMEN WHO DESIRE BEAUTY

Should Embrace this Opportunity to Secure a 60-day Daily Treatment of Dr. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers and Fould's Medicated Arsenic Soap for One Dollar.

If your blood is impure, or if you have pimples, freckles, wrinkles, black-heads, redness of face or nose, a muddy, sallow skin or any blemish whatever on or under the skin, you should procure at once these marvellous beautifiers of the complexion, skin, and form. This ad. must be sent with your order. If you cannot send now, cut this out and send when it is convenient, as this offer will be good any time if ad. is sent with your order. Address

H. B. FOULD, Room 31, 214 Sixth Ave., N. Y. Sold by Druggists Everywhere.

The Secret of a Good Complexion

To all Women who desire beauty

NEAT'S Witch-Hazel Jelly

a sure cure for sunburn, pimples, freckles, dark rings under the eyes, and all other blemishes, whether on the face, neck, arms, or body.

It imparts the most exquisite fairness, makes the roughest skin, after a few applications, become soft, assuming the complexion of natural freshness.

If you cannot get it at your dealer's, on receipt of 25 cents we will mail you, post-paid, a tube quadruple the size displayed in the illustration. Address

Dept. L.

Neat-Richardson Drug Co.

LOUISVILLE, KY.



The Fair Engineer

Copyright 1900, by Dudley Walker.

ART PHOTOGRAPH

From human life at its very height. Pictures the joy of living; breathes with American spirit. The successful blending of girlish grace and masterful strength.

The way to own one of these beautiful art photographs, which are not process reproductions but are 3 1/2 inch photographs mounted on double mats, worthy of and ready for framing, is to send 35 cents in coin together with the name of the publication in which you read this advertisement to Dudley Walker, 306 Broadway Building, Chicago, Illinois. On the back of the mat an eraset is provided so that "Her First Run" may be immediately hung without further inconvenience or expense.

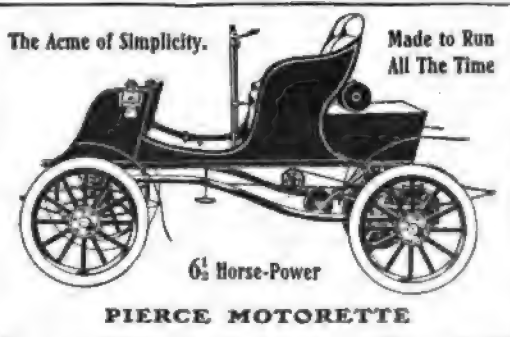
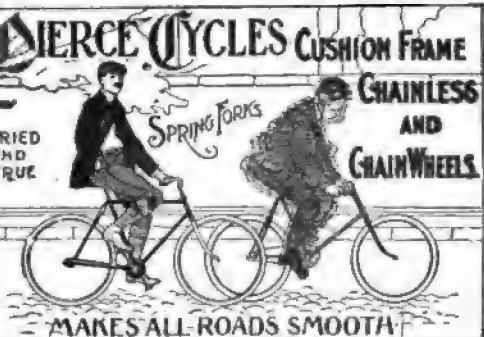
\$3.00 SILK ELASTIC STOCKING

Write for Pamphlet K.

TRUSSEES, ABDOMINAL SUPPORTERS, ETC.

FLAVELL'S, 1905 Spring Garden Street, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

ORE LYES DI ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER



GEO. N. PIERCE CO., BUFFALO, N. Y. Pierce Cycles and Arrow Motor Cars. Catalogues free on Application

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VISIT AUNT POLLY. — Concluded.

VI.





PERFECTION IN BUST AND FIGURE

The Knowledge How to Possess It
YOURS FOR THE ASKING.

Would you have a form second to none, perfectly free from all scrawny and hollow places, and a bust as full, plump, and firm as you could desire? You may easily obtain these inestimable blessings if you write to **MME. HASTINGS**, the marvelously successful **Form and Face Specialist**, of Chicago, for her famous system of development, a discovery which vigorously stimulates the developing forces of nature and makes plump all the flat and sunken places and which creates the most fascinating and beautiful curves. It enlarges the bust measure 6 inches and makes the arms and neck plump and round. The **Nadine** system is the one praised so highly by leading society women everywhere. It is perfectly harmless and failure is unknown. **Special instructions** are given to thin women to gain 15 to 20 lbs. more in weight and round out the entire form. While using this treatment you will receive constant care by mail until you are entirely developed. Prominent physicians highly endorse and prescribe it because of its great superiority over everything else known for physical development. Upon request and a stamp for postage, a package, sealed in a plain wrapper, will be sent you containing beautiful photos and full information how to develop yourself at home. Do not fail to write at once to

MME. HASTINGS, A.D., 59 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

CATARRH Its cure positively guaranteed by a new method without swallowing medicine. Cost slight. Money back in 10 days if not satisfied. Write for full information.

CHICAGO VAPORIZER CO., 25 Chicago Ave., Chicago.

OPIUM MORPHINE and LIQUOR HABITS CURED. Sanatorium Established 1875. Thousands having failed elsewhere have been cured by us. Treatment can be taken at home. Write The Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. P 3, Lebanon, O.

SORE EYES DR. L. A. C. THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

LADIES Why not have a beautiful complexion, one which gives a youthful appearance, and may be worth a fortune to you. New. Life Beauty Tablets are positively guaranteed to cure all eruptions of the skin, beautify the complexion and purify the blood. You can try them free. Enclose stamp to **Standard Toilet Co., Dept. H., Indiana, Pa.**

YOUR FORTUNE FREE: Mysteries revealed. All questions on Love, Marriage, Business, etc., answered; 20 years' successful practice in Europe and America. The world recognizes me as the **KING of ASTROLOGERS**. All correspondence confidential. Send birth date and ten cents for postage to Professor Fredericks, 240 W. 42d St., New York City

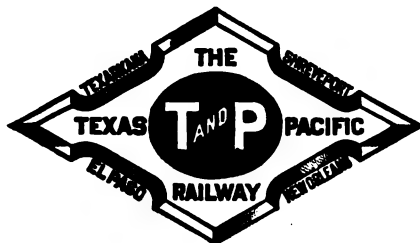
FREE A Three Weeks' Treatment For Thin-Blooded People, Pleasant to take, harmless to the system. They cure Nervousness, Rheumatism, Indigestion, Blood Purifier and Tonic. A great flesh producer. You derive all the benefit and nourishment from these tablets that you would from the pure blood of a healthy bullock. Thin people gain ten pounds a month. It costs you nothing to try them. Better send to-day. Ten cents for the postage on the same. We send Tablets prepaid. **W. A. HENDERSON, Dept. L, Clarinda, Iowa.**

OX-BLOOD TABLETS

JAYNE'S EXPECTORANT

CURES THE WORST COLDS

4-IMPORTANT GATEWAYS-4



L. S. THORNE, Third V.-P. and Gen'l Mgr.,

FINEST PASSENGER SERVICE IN TEXAS.

E. P. TURNER, Gen'l Pass. and Tkt. Agt.

DALLAS, TEXAS.

MR. DOGLETS AND HIS DOG VISIT AUNT POLLY.—Concluded.

VI.





PERFECTION IN BUST AND FIGURE

The Knowledge How to Possess It
YOURS FOR THE ASKING.

Would you have a form second to none, perfectly free from all screwy and hollow places, and a bust as full, plump, and firm as you could desire? You may easily obtain these inestimable blessings if you write to **Mme. Hastings**, the marvellously successful **Form and Face Specialist**, of Chicago, for her famous system of development, a discovery which vigorously stimulates the developing forces of nature and makes plump all the flat and sunken places and which creates the most fascinating and beautiful curves. It enlarges the bust measure 6 inches and makes the arms and neck plump and round. The **Nadine** system is the one praised so highly by leading society women everywhere. It is perfectly harmless and failure is unknown. **Special instructions** are given to thin women to gain 15 to 20 lbs. more in weight and round out the entire form. While using this treatment you will receive constant care by mail until you are entirely developed. Prominent physicians highly endorse and prescribe it because of its great superiority over everything else known for physical development. Upon request and a stamp for postage, a package, sealed in a plain wrapper, will be sent you containing beautiful photos and full information how to develop yourself at home. Do not fail to write at once to

MME. HASTINGS, A.D., 59 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

CATARRH its cure positively guaranteed by a new method without swallowing medicine. Cost slight. Money back in 10 days if not satisfied. Write for full information.

CHICAGO VAPORIZER CO., 25 Chicago Ave., Chicago.

OPIMUM MORPHINE and LIQUOR HABITS CURED. Sanatorium Established 1876. Thousands having failed elsewhere have been cured by us. Treatment can be taken at home.

Write **The Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. P 3, Lebanon, O.**

FREE A Three Weeks' Treatment For **Thin-Blooded People**. Pleasant to take, harmless to the system. They cure Nervousness, Rheumatism, Indigestion, Blood Purifier and Tonic. A great flesh producer. You derive all the benefit and nourishment from these tablets that you would from the pure blood of a healthy bullock. Thin people gain ten pounds a month. It costs you nothing to try them. Better send to-day.

n cents for the postage on the same. We send Tablets prepaid. **W. A. HENDERSON, Dept. L, Clarinda, Iowa.**

SORE EYES Dr. Isaac Thompson's Eye Water

LADIES Why not have a beautiful complexion, one which gives a youthful appearance, and may be worth a fortune to you. New. **Life Beauty Tablets** are positively guaranteed to cure all eruptions of the skin, beautify the complexion and purify the blood. You can try them free. Enclose stamp to **Standard Toilet Co., Dept. H., Indiana, Pa.**

YOUR FORTUNE FREE. Mysteries revealed. All questions on Love, Marriage, Business, etc., answered; 20 years' successful practice in Europe and America. The world recognizes me as the **KING OF ASTROLOGERS**. All correspondence confidential. Send birth date and ten cents for postage to **Professor Fredericks, 240 W. 42d St., New York City**

LAYNE'S EXPECTORANT

CURES THE WORST COLDS

4-IMPORTANT GATEWAYS-4



FINEST PASSENGER SERVICE IN TEXAS.

L. S. THORNE, Third V.-P. and Gen'l Mgr.,

E. P. TURNER, Gen'l Pass. and Tkt. Agt.

DALLAS, TEXAS.

Lippincott's Biographical Dictionary

THE great strides in every field of human activity during the century just closed have added thousands of new names to the lists of those whom the world delights to honor, a fact which the publishers of "LIPPINCOTT'S PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY AND MYTHOLOGY" have recognized by giving that notable work of reference a thorough and extended revision.

The biographical notices included in previous editions have been brought down to date, and a great number of new names have been added; so that the book in its latest edition is complete to the opening year of the twentieth century, and stands to-day—as always since the publication of its first edition—without a peer among works of similar intent and scope. Among the many features of excellence which have called forth the highest praise from hundreds of men prominent in the affairs of mankind may be cited specifically the admirable system of Orthography, repeated on every page for the sake of convenience; and the comprehensive plan of Pronunciation, the data for which were secured by Dr. Thomas during an extended sojourn in Europe and the Orient.

2 large 8vo vols. 2550 double-column pages. Buckram, \$15.00; half russia, \$17.50; half morocco, \$20.00

Lippincott's Pronouncing Gazetteer of the World

NEW REVISED EDITION

IN addition to the great collection of matter contained in former editions, comprising notices of over ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND PLACES, this edition has been enriched by a "SUPPLEMENT," in which are contained latest details concerning the United States, Cuba, Porto Rico, the Hawaiian and Philippine Islands, Guam, South and Central America, South Africa (with other African matter of interest), the Colonies and Dependencies of the Powers, a Conspectus of the Twelfth Census of the United States, and recent figures and statistics of population and commerce the world over, so bringing the work down to the latest possible date before printing. The results of recent explorations are thus made available, and the political readjustments of the last few years are summarized. Send for sample pages and full particulars.

2 large 8vo vols. Buckram, \$15.00; half russia, \$17.50; half morocco, \$20.00. One vol., sheep, \$8.00, net; half russia or half morocco, \$10.00, net

Publishers—J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY—Philadelphia

A NEW BREAD



COOK'S FLAKED RICE mixed with bread dough
in the right proportions makes a most delicious bread.

A Ten Dollar
Gold Prize
Given for

\$10.00

The best
Flaked Rice
Bread receipt

COOK'S FLAKED RICE is sold by your grocer.
In each package is a little Cook-book which tells
how to make many delicious new dishes. In sending
us your bread receipt write your name and address
plainly, directing envelope to

COOK'S FLAKED RICE CO., 1 Union Square, New York City.

Your Vacation in Colorado

TOURIST TICKETS FOR HALF FARE

A Colorado trip this year will cost very little. We are going to sell round trip tickets from Chicago for \$30. From St. Louis \$25. Practically half fare. Eastern railroad agents will sell through tickets based on these rates. This will enable people of moderate means to spend their holiday in the delightful Colorado country. Special tickets will be sold July 1 to 10 for even less than named above.

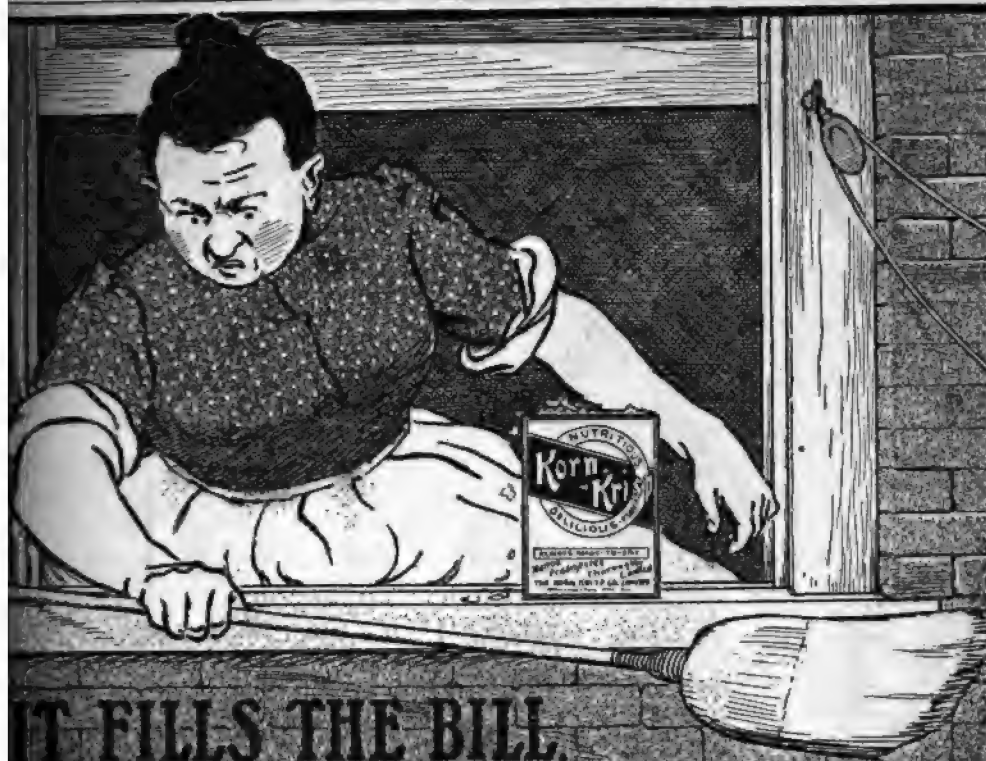
**Burlington
Route**

OUR HANDBOOK OF COLORADO

which we will send if requested, without charge, tells all about the hotels, boarding houses and ranches, their prices, names and addresses of the proprietors, attractions within reach, rates for livery, the fishing and hunting, charges for guides, etc. You can get excellent accommodations for \$8 to \$10 a week. Send for a copy. Do it *today* and with the book I will enclose a circular telling about the railroad ticket rates and our fast "one night on the road" trains between Chicago or St. Louis and Colorado.

There is no place in the world like Colorado for beauty of mountain scenery and perfection of climate—it is ideal. I have never known anyone to return from Colorado disappointed. Where could you find a more delightful place to spend your vacation?

Don't forget. Send *today* for a copy of our Colorado handbook. It is well worth looking over even if you don't make the trip.



IT FILLS THE BILL.

Korn-Krisp

Best Malted Food.

Satisfying, Delicious, Crisp
and Ready-to-Serve.

One taste convinces.



CREAM^{OF} WHEAT



-NONE BUT THE BRAVE
DESERVE THE FARE-

At least such fare as

CREAM ^{of} WHEAT

Dainty for Breakfast

Appetizing for Lunch

Delicious for a Dinner Dessert

CREAM OF WHEAT CO.

Minneapolis, Minn.

Provident

LIFE AND TRUST
CO., PHILADELPHIA

W. CORNER FOURTH
AND CHESTNUT STREETS
(NOS. 401-409)

Evidence of the skilful and faithful management of this company is found in its exceedingly low expense rate, and the remarkably favorable rate of mortality. For the whole period of its existence, the death rate has been only sixty-one per cent. of the rate indicated by the authoritative tables.

The organization of the company affords a strong guaranty of safe management for the future. There is the same need for care and intelligent discrimination in selecting a life insurance company that there is in selecting investments for a trust fund. The question of the first importance in either case is the question of absolute security.

Persons contemplating insurance are invited to address the company for rates and general information.

STECK

PIANOS

For Forty-six Years

inseparably associated with the highest achievements of musical art.

Used in hundreds of schools and musical institutions because of their exquisite tone qualities and unexcelled durability.

This should be of interest to every intending purchaser of a piano.

Catalogues sent free on application.

GEORGE STECK & CO.
136 Fifth Avenue. New York

THE OLD RELIABLE"

What of the Future ?

Have you ever considered what will become of your loved ones after you are gone ? Or, what will become of you in your old age ? We have made provision for you in either case.

Our FREE booklet, "The How and the Why," gives our plan. Write for it.

PENN MUTUAL LIFE

921-3-5 CHESTNUT STREET

PHILADELPHIA

TRY ALL PIANO PLAYERS

and you will find out why so many people with real taste for music prefer the

Chase & Baker Piano Player

Anybody can play any music upon it, and it offers everybody the power of giving the expression of a musician to the music than any other player.

It is the player for the trained musician as well as the beginner.

The pleasure is all yours—the work is all the player's.

THE CHASE & BAKER COMPANY



PERILS OF THE ROAD.

I.



The Best Morning Laxative.
Used by American Physicians for 58 years.
At Drugists, 50c. and \$1.00, or by mail from
TARRANT CO. (Bus. Est. 1834.) **NEW YORK.**

FAN PUBLISHING CO., Dept. 20, Philadelphia

WELL GINSENG GARDEN, JOPLIN, MO., U.S.A.

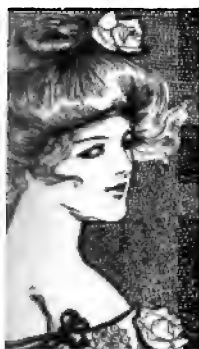


CHICAGO: 82 State Street.
AGENTS IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES.

PERILS OF THE ROAD.—Continued.

II.





THE SECRET OF A GOOD COMPLEXION

ALL WOMEN WHO DESIRE BEAUTY

Should Embrace this Opportunity to Secure a 60-day Daily Treatment of Dr. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers and Fould's Medicated Arsenic Soap for One Dollar.

If your blood is impure, or if you have pimples, freckles, wrinkles, black-heads, redness of face or nose, a muddy, sallow skin or any blemish whatever on or under the skin, you should procure at once these marvellous beautifiers of the complexion, skin, and form. This ad. must be sent with your order. If you cannot send now, cut this out and send when it is convenient, as this offer will be good any time if ad. is sent with your order. Address

H. B. FOULD, Room 31, 214 Sixth Ave., N. Y. Sold by Druggists Everywhere.

Secret of a Good Complexion

To all Women who desire beauty

NEAT'S Witch-Hazel Jelly

a sure cure for sunburn, pimples, freckles, dark rings under the eyes, and all other blemishes, whether on the face, neck, arms, or body. It imparts the most exquisite fairness, makes the roughest skin, after a few applications, become soft, assuming the complexion of natural freshness.



Dept. L.

-Richardson Drug Co.
LOUISVILLE, KY.

BREAD MACHINE FOR HOUSEHOLD USE



Sifts the flour and mixes 10 lbs. of best bread in 3 minutes. Send for Booklet. Agents wanted.

SCIENTIFIC BREAD MACHINE CO.,

(CYRUS CHAMBERS, JR.)

Fifty-second and Media Streets, Philadelphia.

Scott Yachts, Launches, Row Boats, Canoes, Motors, both two and four cycle, 1 to 40 H. P. Agents for complete illustrated catalog and tell us AGENCIES IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES.
BOAT MFG. CO., St. Joseph, Michigan.

PIANO Do You Want a Genuine Bargain

Hundreds of Upright Pianos returned from renting to be disposed of at once. They include Steinways, Knabes, Fischers, Sterlings and other well known makes. Many can not be distinguished from new yet all are offered at a great discount. Uprights as low as \$100. Also beautiful New Uprights at \$125, \$150 and \$185. A fine instrument at \$250, fully equal to many \$400 pianos. Monthly payments accepted. Freight only about \$5. Write for particulars. A great saving assured. Strongest guarantee. Illustrated Piano Book Free.

LYON & HEALY, 40 Adams St., CHICAGO.

World's largest music house; sells everything known in music

PERILS OF THE ROAD.—Continued.

III.



The AL-VISTA



A PERFECT "SNAP" WHY?—BECAUSE.

You can take the whole view with one snap, or, with some models, stop the lens at five different places, and thus make five different widths of pictures, all depending on just how much of the view you wish. These are features no other camera possesses.

OUR CO-OPERATIVE PLAN

We now send you any camera described in our catalogue upon a small payment being made. The remainder you may pay in monthly installments while you are using the camera. Write us for full information about this.

MULTISCOPE & FILM CO.
1206 Jefferson Street, BURLINGTON, WIS.



Photographic Perfection

is attained by making your negatives on

ANSKO: THE NEW DAYLIGHT LOADING FILM
and your prints on

CYKO: THE PAPER THAT PRINTS AT NIGHT

ANSKO and CYKO have no peers in Keeping Quality and in Latitude of Exposure and Development.

Trial Dozen 4x5 CYKO and Developer. 20 cents.

ANSKO films are made under the celebrated Goodwin Patent and are adapted for Kodak's, bull's-eyes and all Film Cameras.

CYKO Manual and ANSKO Booklet sent on application.

THE ANTHONY & SCOVILL CO.
122-124 Fifth Ave., New York. Atlas Block, Chicago

? RELIANCE ?

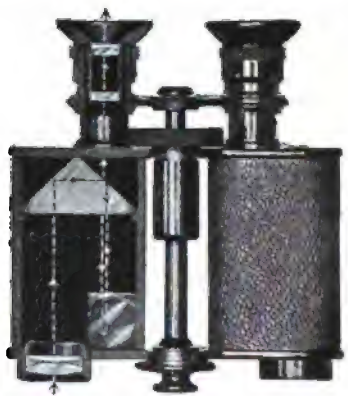
Have you picked the Winner? Then you'll want to see her win. We can help you,—with the peerless

TURNER-REICH BINOCULAR

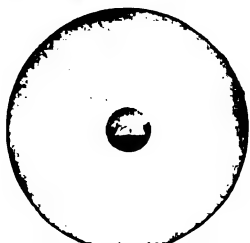
When you pick your Winner among BINOCULARS, place your RELIANCE on the TURNER-REICH; it's no SHAM

Write for Price List

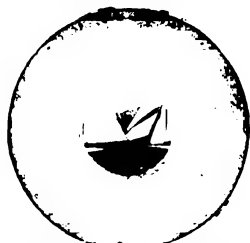
GUNDLACH-MANHATTAN OPTICAL CO.
738 So. Clinton Ave., Rochester, N. Y.




Size of yachts as seen with the unaided eye.



Field of the bulky old style 8-power Binocular



As seen with the 8-power Turner-Reich Binocular.



PERILS OF THE ROAD.—(Continued.)

IV.





HAMMOND

only Typewriter which enables one to
on the same machine, twenty-six languages
one hundred styles of type.

other typewriter possesses, in as high a
any one of the following three essential

EED EASE OF OPERATION
EXCELLENCE OF WORK
ing Machine of Universal Adaptability

HAMMOND TYPEWRITER CO.

y and General Offices, 69th to 70th Sts. East River
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Offices in Principal Cities. Representatives every where.

Your eyes will admire its
beautiful work.

Your ears will enjoy the
absence of noise.

Your hands will take
pleasure in the
light-running action.

Your senses will approve of it.
Your dollars will purchase it.



YOST WRITING MACHINE CO.
245 Broadway, New York

TYPEWRITERS ALL MAKES

All the Standard machines SOLD or RENTED ANYWHERE
as HALF MANUFACTURERS' PRICES. Shipped with
privilege of examination. Send for Catalogue.

TYPEWRITER EMPORIUM, 204 La Salle St., CHICAGO.

BUSINESS for yourself; stop working for
others. We start you in profit-
Order business at your home. Pleasant work;
profits; unlimited possibilities. Full information
FRANKLIN HOWARD CO., Denver, Colorado.

NTS PROMPTLY SECURED. Terms moder-
ate. Write for book on patents and any infor-
mation desired. A. J. Wedderburn, Jr.,
Patent Atty., Washington, D. C.

DR. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

THE LOCKE ADDER

Only

Buy a
Locke Adder
to save your brain

CAPACITY 999,999,999

Fastest, simplest, handiest, most practical and durable low-
priced calculating machine. Adds, Subtracts, Multiplies, Di-
vides. Cannot make mistakes. Computes nine columns sim-
ultaneously. Saves time, labor, brain, and will last a lifetime.

"One should be in every business office."—Joe Lee Jameson,
State Revenue Agent, Austin, Texas.

"It is worth its weight in gold."—Chas. W. Thompson, Spec'l
Agt. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Boston, Mass.

Price \$5.00, prepaid in U. S. Booklet free. Agents wanted.

C. E. LOCKE M'FG CO., 31 Walnut St. Kensett, Iowa

compactness
ease of operation
perfect alignment
possible writing
all bearing

Five Keys to Business Success

The Bar-Lock Typewriter



has every advantage possessed by
any other machine, and several
improvements to be found no-
where else. Write for catalogue.

Columbia Typewriter Mfg. Co.
43 West 116th St., NEW YORK

PERILS OF THE ROAD.—Continued.
V.



Delightful Comfort

Nowhere can a person secure more real, delightful comfort on a railway journey than on the great trains over the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Ry.

And this is due to the equipment—always the best—excellence of road bed and nicety of track adjustment, features wherein it excels all others, and which make every mile one of comfort and pleasure.

When you have occasion to travel between Chicago and Cleveland, Buffalo, New York and Boston, by using the Lake Shore you will secure absolutely the best in travel that money can buy. For "Book of Trains" or travel information, address

A. J. SMITH, General Pass. and Ticket Agent, Cleveland, Ohio.



Dr. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER



ART PHOTOGRAPH
Human life at its very height. Pictures of living: breathes with American. The successful blending of girlish and masterful strength.
To own one of these beautiful art photographs is not possess reproductions but are early photographs mounted on double mats, cut and ready for framing, is to send 25 cents together with the name of the publication to read this advertisement to Boston, Walker, and South Building, Chicago, Illinois. On the back mount an eyelet is provided so that "Her First Run" can be immediately hung without further assistance or expense.

PLAN YOUR VACATION TRIP VIA THE
"BIG FOUR ROUTE"



BEST REACHED BY THE
"BIG FOUR"
THE INDIANAPOLIS CINCINNATI, OHIO, AND CLEVELAND, OHIO

PERILS OF THE ROAD.—Concluded.
VI.





PERFECTION IN BUST AND FIGURE

The Knowledge How to Possess It
YOURS FOR THE ASKING.

Would you have a form second to none, perfectly free from all scrawny and hollow places, and a bust as full, plump, and firm as you could desire? You may easily obtain these inestimable blessings if you write to **Mme. Hastings**, the marvelously successful **Form and Face Specialist**, of Chicago, for her famous system of development, a discovery which vigorously stimulates the developing forces of nature and makes plump all the flat and sunken places and which creates the most fascinating and beautiful curves. It enlarges the bust measure 6 inches and makes the arms and neck plump and round. The Nadine system is the one praised so highly by leading society women everywhere. It is perfectly harmless and failure is unknown. Special instructions are given to thin women to gain 15 to 30 lbs. more in weight and round out the entire form. While using this treatment you will receive constant care by mail until you are entirely developed. Prominent physicians highly endorse and prescribe it because of its great superiority over everything else known for physical development. Upon request and a stamp for postage, a package, sealed in a plain wrapper, will be sent you containing beautiful photos and full information how to develop yourself at home. Do not fail to write at once to

MME. HASTINGS, A.D., 59 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

ARRH Its cure positively guaranteed by a new method without swallowing medicine. Money back in 10 days if not. Write for full information.

APORIZER CO., 25 Chicago Ave., Chicago.

SORE EYES DR. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

LADIES

Why not have a beautiful complexion, one which gives a youthful appearance, and may be worth a fortune to you. New. Life Beauty Tablets are positively guaranteed to cure all eruptions of the skin, beautify the complexion and purify the blood. You can try them free. Enclose stamp to **Standard Toilet Co., Dept. H., Indiana, Pa.**

SMALLPOX PITTINGS

eradicated: remarkable home treatment. Send for description. **DR. RODGERS, Suite B. 167 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.**

UM MORPHINE and LIQUOR HABITS CURED. Sanatorium Established 1876. Thousands having failed elsewhere have been cured by us. Treatment can be taken at home.

r. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. P 3, Lebanon, O.

REE

A Three Weeks' Treatment For Thin-Blooded People. Pleasant to take, harmless to the system. They cure Nervousness, Rheumatism, Indigestion, Blood Purifier and Tonic. A great flesh producer. You derive all the benefit and nourishment from these tablets that you would from the pure blood of a healthy bullock. Thin people gain ten pounds a month. It costs you nothing to try them. Better send to-day.

the postage on the same. We send Tablets prepaid. **W. A. HENDERSON, Dept. L, Clarinda, Iowa.**

Ox-Blood TABLETS

YNE'S EXPECTORANT

CURES THE WORST COLDS

-IMPORTANT GATEWAYS—4

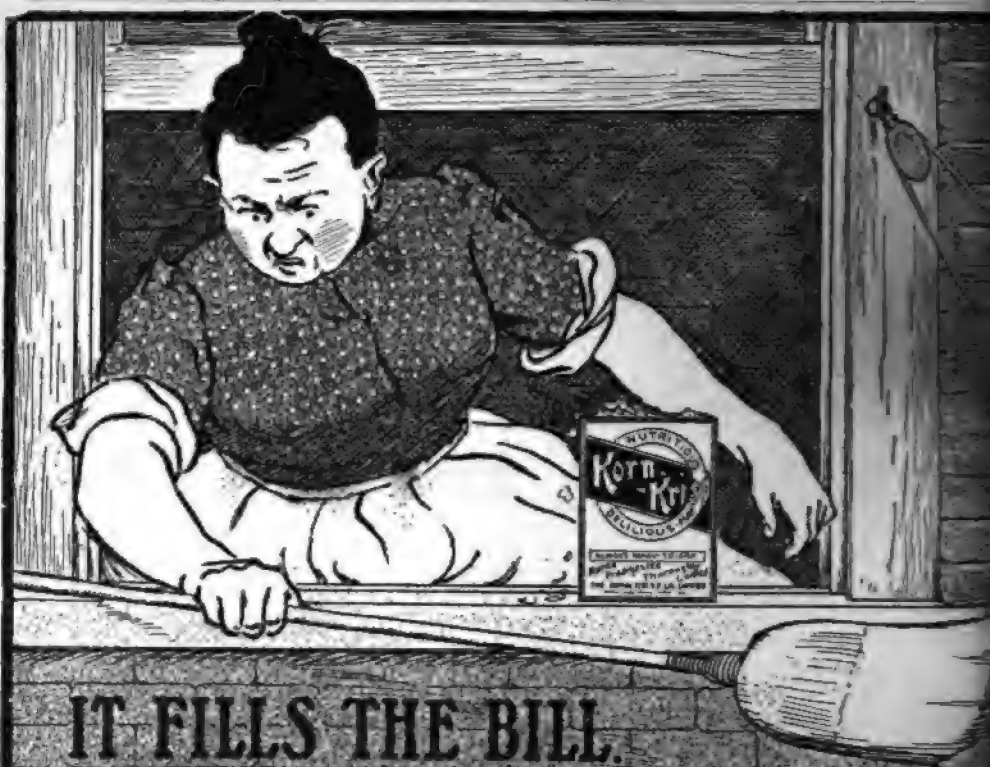


FINEST PASSENGER SERVICE IN TEXAS.

THORNE, Third V.-P. and Gen'l Mgr.,

E. P. TURNER, Gen'l Pass. and Tkt. Agt.

DALLAS, TEXAS.



IT FILLS THE BILL.

Korn-Krisp

Best Malted Food.

Satisfying, Delicious, Crisp
and Ready-to-Serve.

One taste convinces.





the HAMMOND

the only Typewriter which enables one to
e, on the same machine, twenty-six languages
over one hundred styles of type.

As other typewriter possessors, in as high a
ree, any one of the following three essential
ures

SPEED EASE OF OPERATION
EXCELLENCE OF WORK
Writing Machine of Universal Adaptability

HAMMOND TYPEWRITER CO.

Factory and General Offices, 62th to 64th Sts. East River

NEW YORK, N. Y.

3 Offices in Principal Cities. Representatives everywhere.

TYPEWRITERS ALL MAKES
All the Standard machines **SOLD or RENTED ANYWHERE**
at **HALF MANUFACTURERS' PRICES** Shipped with
privilege of examination. Send for Catalogue.
TYPEWRITER EMPORIUM, 204 La Salle St., CHICAGO.

BUSINESS for yourself; stop working for
others. We start you in profit-
able business at your home. Pleasant work;
profits; unlimited possibilities. Full information
p. **FRANKLIN HOWARD CO., Denver, Colorado.**

REVOLVERS, GUNS, SWORDS, MILITARY
Goods, NEW and old, auctioned to F. Bannerman, 579
way, N. Y. Large illustrated 25c catalog mailed for 6c stamps.

D. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

The Ball Bearing DENSMORE



Can save you time, work, and money.
Let us show you the improvements
by which the **DENSMORE DOES**
MORE than any other typewriter.

Catalogue for the asking.

DENSMORE TYPEWRITER CO.,
309 Broadway, New York.

THE LOCKE ADDER
Only **\$5**
Buy a
Locke Adder
to save your brain
CAPACITY 999,999,999
Fastest, simplest, handiest, most practical and durable, low-
priced calculating machine. Adds, Subtracts, Multiplies, Di-
vides. Cannot make mistakes. Computes nine columns sim-
ultaneously. Saves time, labor, brain, and will last a lifetime.
"One should be in every business office."—Joe Lee Jameson,
State Revenue Agent, Austin, Texas.
"It is worth its weight in gold."—Chas. W. Thompson, Spec'l
Agt. U. S. Dept. of Labor, Boston, Mass.
Price \$5.00, prepaid in U. S. Booklet free. Agents wanted.
C. E. LOCKE MFG CO., 51 Walnut St., Kensett, Iowa.

compactness
ease of operation
perfect alignment
visible writing
ball bearing

Five Keys to Business Success



The Bar-Lock Typewriter

has every advantage possessed by
any other machine, and several
improvements to be found no-
where else. Write for catalogue.

Columbia Typewriter Mfg. Co.
43 West 116th St., NEW YORK

A FALSE ALARM.



Josephine: "With you, Doctor, I've really enjoyed my trip, and I want to get something for mother and myself. I'll take with me a bottle of the very best hair cream that you have. I'll also get a box of soap and a bottle of perfume."

"The Busy Man's Train."

Appropriate in its Name,

Appropriate in its Route,

Appropriate in its Character---

'The 20th Century Limited.'

This is *The* century of all the ages.
The New York Central's 20-hour train
between New York and Chicago (the two
great commercial centres of America) is
The train of the century, and is appro-
priately named

'THE 20th CENTURY LIMITED'

A copy of "America's Summer Resorts" will be
sent free, postpaid, on receipt of a postage-stamp by
George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New
York Central and Hudson River Railroad, Grand Cen-
tral Station, New York.

FREE! FREE!
The New York Banker.

Leading independent mining and financial paper,
giving all the news from all the mining districts, and
providing latest and most reliable information on the
gold and oil industries, principal companies, listed
unlisted stocks, dividends, prices, etc. Every in-
vestor should have it. We will send it free for three
months upon request.

WISNER & CO., 32 Broadway, New York.

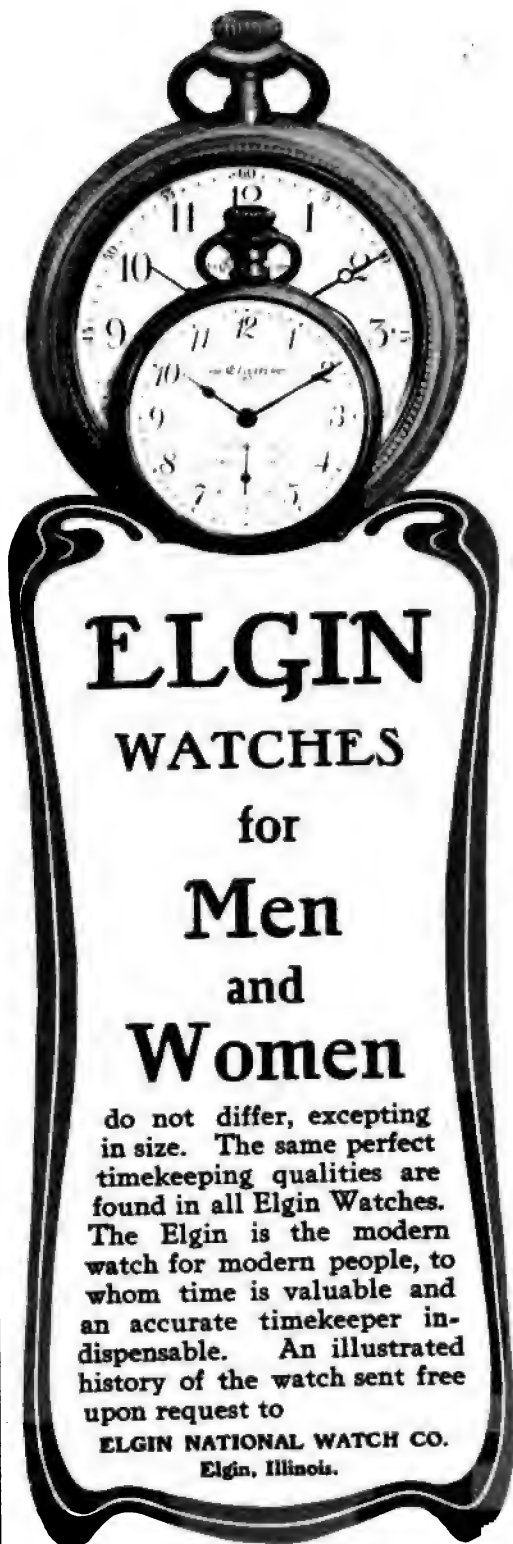
BEST REPEATING SHOT GUN IN THE WORLD
95 In what sportsmen write
about the original
slide lever
SPECIES. Catches in 2 seconds.
Made of Best Forged Steel. Figured twist
steel barrel. Double extractors. Take Down. Shoots Nitro or
black powder. Send \$4. Gun sent C. O. D., \$9.95 and expressage.
is allowed. Special offer reduced from \$75.
JOHN BANNERMAN, 579 Broadway, N. Y.

100 SILK ELASTIC STOCKING

Write for Pamphlet K.

RUGGERS, ABDOMINAL SUPPORTERS, ETC.

WELL'S, 1005 Spring Garden Street,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

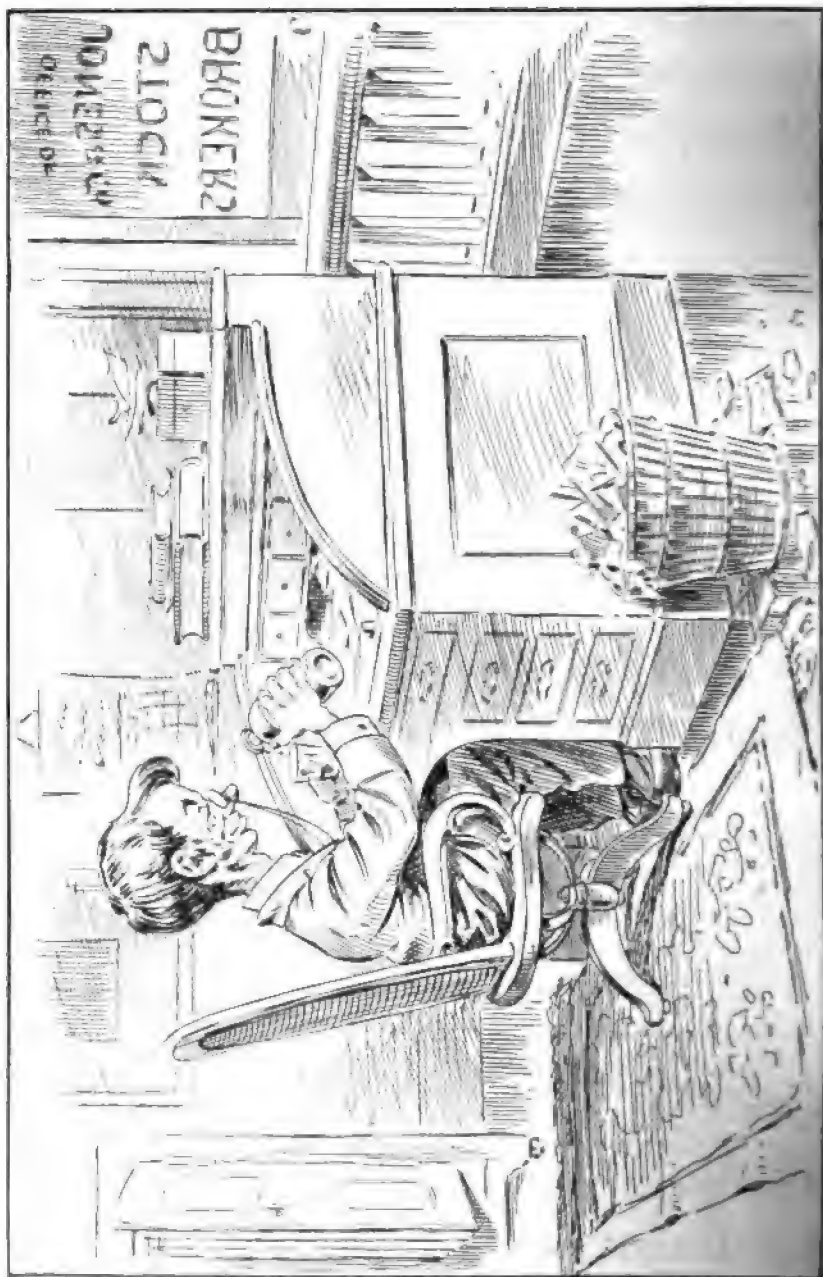


ELGIN
WATCHES
for
Men
and
Women

do not differ, excepting
in size. The same perfect
timekeeping qualities are
found in all Elgin Watches.
The Elgin is the modern
watch for modern people, to
whom time is valuable and
an accurate timekeeper in-
dispensable. An illustrated
history of the watch sent free
upon request to
ELGIN NATIONAL WATCH CO.
Elgin, Illinois.

ISRAEL'S EYE WATER

A FALSE ALARM.—Continued.



James. "I know I'll forget to take this half the time. Guess I'd better take a double dose to make up for it and see how



"Aphridite"
SUMMER WEAR

15 cents,
2 for
25 cents

The best
Collars yet
designed
B.C.C.

**"LITTLE
INDIAN"**
make

For sale at Furnishing Stores

We will send picture No. 10, or four
cents in stamps, with small Catalogue.

H. C. CURTIS & Co.
425 RIVER ST., TROY, N. Y.

See that this
mark is on



Collars and
what you buy.

Jaeger

PURE WOOL

UNDERWEAR

Protects
Against
Temperature Changes.

**The Standard Sanitary
Underwear for Men, Women
and Children.**

Endorsed by Leading Physicians.

*Also various JAEGER Novelties and
Specialties.*

**Don't forget that the Best is the Cheap-
est and that the First Wealth is Health.**

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE.

DR. JAEGER S. W. S. CO.'S OWN STORES.

NEW YORK: 16 West 23d St.; 155-157 Broadway.
BROOKLYN: 804 Fulton Street.
BOSTON: 230-232 Boylston Street.
PHILADELPHIA: 1510 Chestnut Street.
CHICAGO: 82 State Street.

AGENTS IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES.

Hotel Somerset, Commonwealth Avenue, BOSTON.

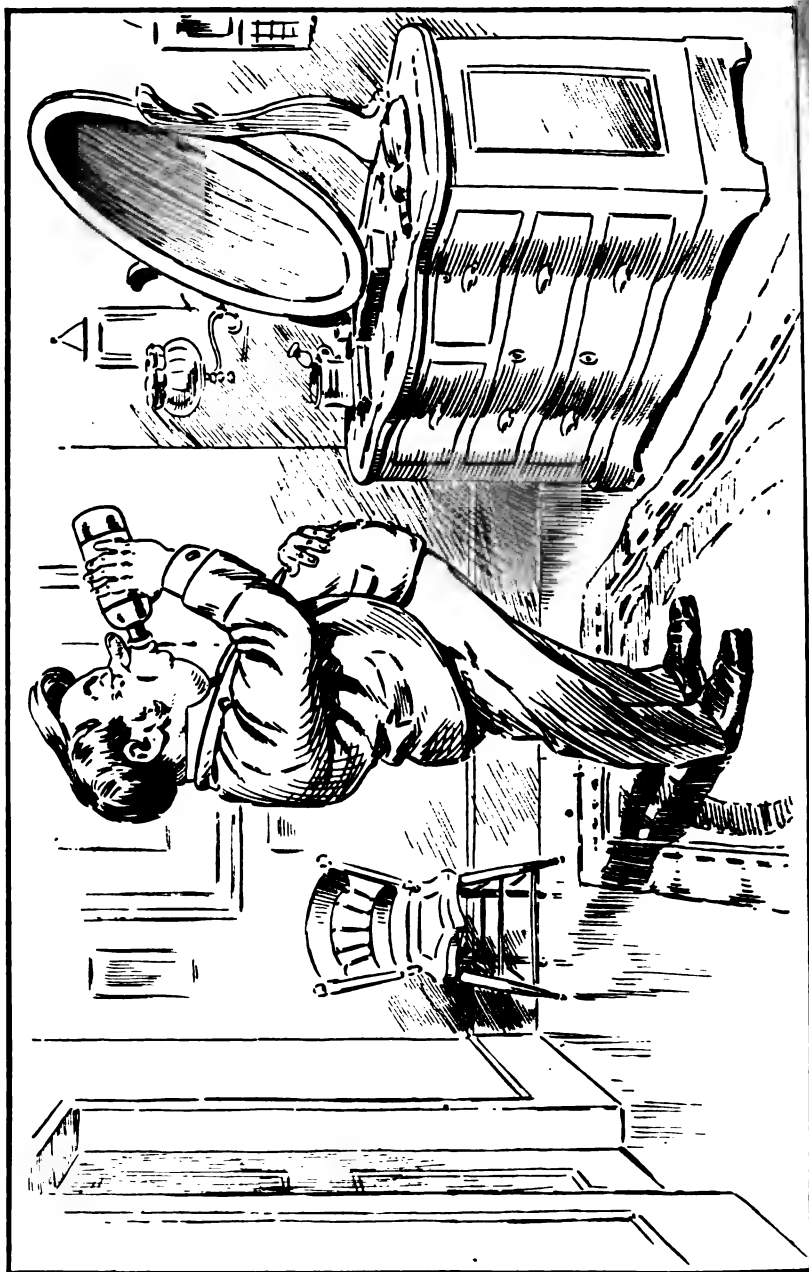
The fashionable centre of the famous Back Bay, and one of the World's most luxurious Hostels, Thoroughly Fireproof. Delightfully located at entrance to Park and Fenway. Ten minutes' ride from Back Bay Stations of N. Y., N. H. & H., and Boston & Albany Railroads, Theatres and Business Centres.

ALFRED S. AMER, Manager.

Send for Illustrated Booklet.



A FALSE ALARM.—Continued.



...Well, this stuff certainly *does* like magic. A couple more doses will fix me up all right. I'll keep on with it.

DENTACURA

TOOTH-PASTE

IS THE BEST

Commended by 3000 Dentists. Cleans the teeth and destroys harmful bacteria, thus retarding decay and preserving the teeth. Be sure you get Dentacura. Avoid substitutes. At druggists, 25 cents, or sent direct on receipt of price.

Made only by the
Dentacura Company, Newark, N. J., U. S. A.

If Headachy



o heart depressant or narcotic, but a
ain clearer and stomach settler; it brings
e liver and bowels into healthy action.
Used by American Physicians nearly 60 years.
50c. and \$1. at Druggists or by mail from
HE TARRANT CO., 21 Jay Street, New York

Learn the truth

Every man and woman, particularly those entered upon matrimony, should possess the new and valuable book

Sexology

by WILLIAM H. WALLING, A.M., M.D.
which sensibly treats of the sexual relations of both sexes, and, as well, how and when to advise son or daughter. Unequalled endorsement of the press, ministry, legal, and medical professions.

Do you know that the main cause of unhappiness, ill health, sickly children, and divorce is admitted by physicians and shown by court records to be ignorance of the laws of self and sex?

Sent, post-paid, on receipt of the price
Fine Morocco binding, \$1.50; cloth-bound, \$1.00
Write for "Other People's Opinions" and "Table of Contents,"
100-page illustrated catalogue of books of merit—FREE.

FAN PUBLISHING CO., Dept. 20, Philadelphia.

INSENG

made from one-half acre.
t valuable crop in the world.
rown throughout the U. S. and Canada.
your garden to grow thousands of dollars worth.

TS AND SEEDS FOR SALE.

or cents for postage and get Booklet B-F, which tells
t it.

TELL GINSENG GARDEN, JOPLIN, MO., U.S.A.

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

MENNEN'S

BORATED TALCUM

Toilet Powder

DELICIOUSLY AFTER BATHING.
A LUXURY AFTER SHAVING.
Beautifies and Preserves the Complexion

A positive relief for PRICKLY HEAT, CHAFING and SUNBURN,
and all afflictions of the skin. The only Moistener and perspiration
free it has no equal. Removes all odor of perspiration. Last
MENNEN'S (the original) is little lighter in price, perhaps, than
workable substitutes, but there is a reason for it. And everywhere
it sells for 25 cents. Great beauty and perfume. Change Size.
EDWARD MENNEN CO., Chicago, Ill.
MENNEN'S VIOLET TALCUM

A \$10

GINSENG

GARDEN

WILL

YIELD

\$7000

IN

10

YEARS

400,000,000 Chinese use
Ginseng root for its medical
properties. American
exporters pay \$5 to \$10 per
pound. Seeds and young
plants also bring big
prices and immense
profits. Demand is
increasing; supply
very limited. Hardy
everywhere
in U. S.
and
Canada.

Adapted for growing in
town or
country.
Should be
planted in fall.
We sell culti-
vated roots and
seeds. Send 4c for
55 p. book on enormous,
easily-earned
profit in Ginseng and
copy of magazine, "The
Ginseng Garden."
CHINESE-AMERICAN GINSENG CO.
Dept. 51 • • • Scranton, Pa.

LADIES Why not have a beautiful complexion, one which gives a youthful appearance, and may be worth a fortune to you. New. Life Beauty Tablets are positively guaranteed to cure all eruptions of the skin, beautify the complexion and purify the blood. You can try them free. Enclose stamp to Standard Toilet Co., Dept. H., Indiana, Pa.

HAY FEVER Its cure positively guaranteed by a new method without swallowing medicine. Cost slight. **Money back in 10 days** if not satisfied. Write for full information.

CHICAGO VAPORIZER CO., 25 Chicago Ave., Chicago.

A FALSE ALARM.—(Continued.)



BRIEFLY.—"Run for your life, Mr. S. the hotel's on fire!"

and for New FREE BOOK THE WHAT! THE WHY! THE WAY! OF THE INTERNAL BATH BY MEANS OF THE J.B.L. CASCADE

It Tells the Secret of Perfect Health

That the cause of more than 90 per cent. of all diseases are due to a slow poisoning of the system through a clogging of the drainage provided by nature, a fact not generally known. The Internal Bath (large intestine) thus making it possible for the system to throw off easily and naturally, all the accumulated waste. It has been found efficient in the most stubborn chronic cases of diseases of the stomach and intestines which have defied all other treatment. This wonderful system of treatment is effecting cures which seem little short of miraculous—especially when the certainty, ease and safety of the method is considered. The J. B. L. Cascade removes the waste and cleanses the body and is the only appliance specially made for the successful practice of the Internal Bath.

THE ONLY REAL CURE FOR BILIOUSNESS, DYSPEPSIA, HEADACHE, CONSTIPATION, TYPHOID AND MALARIAL DISEASES. THE ONLY TREATMENT THAT GIVES IMMEDIATE RELIEF IN CASES OF OVER-INDULGENCE IN EATING OR DRINKING. IT MAKES BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXIONS.

Hundreds of thousands of people in every part of the world restored to good health by the use of the J. B. L. Cascade.

We want to send free to every person, sick or well, a simple statement setting forth this treatment. It contains matter which must interest every thinking person. If you live in New York you are earnestly invited to call, but if you cannot call, write for our pamphlet "The What, The Why, The Way," which will be sent free on application.

TYRRELL'S HYGIENIC INSTITUTE. 1562 Broadway, N.Y.

Dept. 64 J

Mr. W. J. MILLER says:

"For me it acted like a miracle. No one expected me to live. When I got the 'Cascade' I weighed 112 pounds; now I weigh 167 pounds and am in perfect health."



RELIANCE? SHAMROCK?

Have you picked the Winner? Then you'll want to see her win. We can help you,—with the peerless

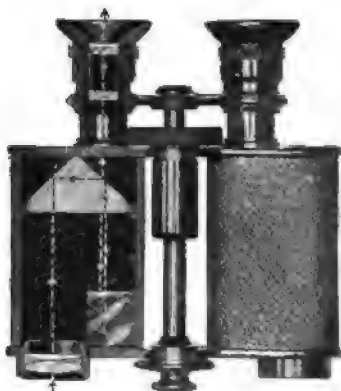
TURNER-REICH BINOCULAR

When you pick your Winner among BINOCULARS, place your RELIANCE on the TURNER-REICH; it's no SHAM

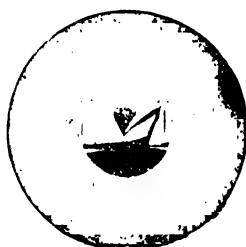
Write for Price List

GUNDLACH-MANHATTAN OPTICAL CO.

738 So. Clinton Ave., Rochester, N. Y.



size of yachts as seen with



Field of the bulky old style



As seen with the 8-power

A FALSE ALARM.—Continued.



Prayer.—"O gracious goodness! too fat to get through the door. I'm lost! Help! help! No, thank Heaven! I'm saved, saved! I have the fire-brick!"

Provident

LIFE AND TRUST
CO., PHILADELPHIA

W. CORNER FOURTH
CHESTNUT STREETS
(NOS. 401-409)

Evidence of the skilful and faithful management of this company is found in its exceedingly low expense rate, and the remarkably favorable rate of mortality. For the whole period of its existence, the death rate has been only sixty-one per cent. of the rate indicated by the authoritative tables.

The organization of the company affords a strong guaranty of safe management for the future. There is the same need for care and intelligent discrimination in selecting a life insurance company that there is in selecting investments for a trust fund. The question of the first importance in either case is the question of absolute security.

Persons contemplating insurance are invited to address the company for rates and general information.

STECK

PIANOS

For Forty-six Years

inseparably associated with the highest achievements of musical art.

Used in hundreds of schools and musical institutions because of their exquisite tone qualities and unexcelled durability.

This should be of interest to every intending purchaser of a piano.

Catalogues sent free on application.

GEORGE STECK & CO.
136 Fifth Avenue, New York

THE OLD RELIABLE"

Don't Be Too Late

How often does the examining doctor have to say to applicants for life insurance: "If you had applied a year ago you would have passed." Don't *you* be too late.

Shall we send you
some literature?

PENN MUTUAL LIFE

921-3-5 CHESTNUT STREET

PHILADELPHIA



WONDERFUL POWER OF EXPRESSION

The ability on the part of the performer to put his own personal musical sympathy into the piece he is playing is one of the rare qualities of the

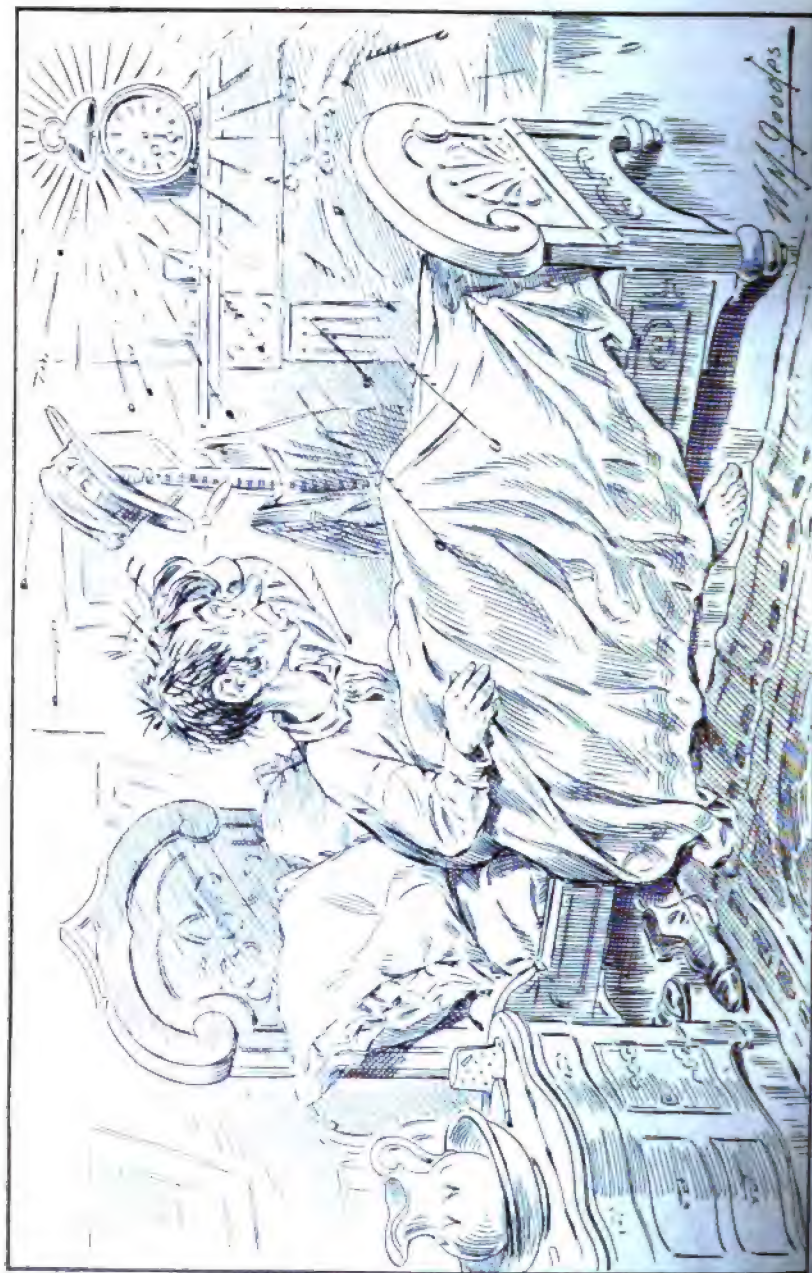
CHASE & BAKER PIANO PLAYER

It has a quick attack and sensitive action. A player which plays anything & anything. The pleasure is all yours—the work is all the piano player's.

THE CHASE & BAKER COMPANY, Buffalo, N. Y.

New York Salesroom: 136 Fifth Avenue

A FALSE ALARM.—Concluded.



It was only Jones's new tin-lid alarm-clock waking him out of his nightmare.



HAMBURG AMERICAN LINE CRUISE TO THE ORIENT

UR ORIENTAL TRIPS have become a most perfect undertaking, after 15 years of valuable experience. It is no longer an experiment. We take you to **MADEIRA, FUNCHAL, (Madeira), GIBRALTAR (Granada and the Alhambra), MALAGA, ALGIERS, GENOA, LEFRANCHE (Nice and Monte Carlo), SYRACUSE, MALTA, ALEXANDRIA (Nile and the Pyramids), YROUTH (Damascus and Baal-Beck), JAFFA (Jerusalem), CONSTANTINOPLE, PIRAEUS (Athens), LAMAKI (Corinth), NAUPLIA (Greece), MESSINA, PALERMO, NAPLES, GENOA, NEW YORK.**

No changing of steamers, customs examinations, waiting for connections, etc. You pay for all your expenses before you leave—side trips can also be arranged for in advance or on board during the trip, but this is optional if you don't wish to bind yourself. Next cruise by the well-known

S. AUGUSTE VICTORIA A PALATIAL FLOATING HOTEL FROM NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 3 **74 days, \$450 and up**

Number of passengers limited to capacity of regular dining-room.

Two Cruises Around the World by the PRINZESSIN VICTORIA LUISE

From September 15, 1904, to January 18, 1905; and January 26, 1905, to May 30, 1905.

Send for Booklet

HAMBURG-AMERICAN LINE, 35-37 Broadway, New York

Hotel Somerset, Commonwealth Avenue, BOSTON.

The fashionable centre of the famous Back Bay, and one of the World's most luxurious Hostelrys. Thoroughly Fireproof. Delightfully located at entrance to Park and Fenway. Ten minutes' ride from Back Bay Stations of N. Y., N. H. & H., and Boston & Albany Railroads, Theatres and Business Centres.

ALFRED J. AMER, Manager.

Send for Illustrated Booklet.



IT WORKED ON HIS FEELINGS.



MARY.—"John! Wakes up, quick! There's burglars upstairs in the chimney."

THREE NEW "Little Indian" Collars



AMERN

BROCTON
AND
CURRAN

High, Low
and
Medium
Ear Collars

No. 8. "A Kiowa."

that this
e-mark is on



Collars and
as you buy

Style book and No. 8 picture sent for
four cents in stamps, or style book and
whole family of ten pictures sent for
35 cents in stamps.

H. C. CURTIS & Co.
425 RIVER ST., TROY, N. Y.

Jaeger PURE WOOL UNDERWEAR

Protects
Against
Temperature Changes.

**The Standard Sanitary
Underwear for Men, Women
and Children.**

Endorsed by Leading Physicians.

Also various JAEGER Novelties and
Specialties.

Don't forget that the Best is the Cheap-
est and that the First Wealth is Health.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE.

DR. JAEGER & W. S. CO.'S OWN STORES.

NEW YORK: 16 West 23d St.; 155-157 Broadway.

BROOKLYN: 804 Fulton Street.

BOSTON: 230-232 Boylston Street.

PHILADELPHIA: 1510 Chestnut Street.

CHICAGO: 82 State Street.

AGENTS IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES.

TO HOLD
THE STOCKINGS UP OR THE
CORSET DOWN

YOU CAN
RELY ON

THE

**Velvet
Grip**

Sample
pair
by mail
25c

CUSHION
BUTTON

**HOSE
SUPPORTER**

If your dealer is "up to date"
he has the popular styles

The Name is on every Loop

GEORGE FROST CO., Makers, Boston, Mass.



That's
the Clasp
that's
Absolutely
Flat.

Never
Tears the
Clothing
or Rubs the
Leg.

BRIGHTON
Flat Clasp Garter

Is a perfect support for the hose. It does not bind
the leg or cause the least discomfort to the wearer.
Made in all fashionable colors—best silk elastic web.
25c. at all dealers or by mail.

PIONEER SUSPENDER CO., 716 Market St., Philadelphia.
Makers of Pioneer Suspenders.

IT WORKED ON HIS FEELINGS.—Continued.



Revised and corrected by the author. The author is not responsible for the accuracy of the facts or the opinions expressed in this work. The author is not responsible for the accuracy of the facts or the opinions expressed in this work.

WE SEARCH THE WORLD
For Good Men

The search is never ending,
 since we are steadily removing from
 our lists the names of men successfully
 placed. We bring together

BRAINS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

We have positions open for executive,
 clerical, and technical men, paying from
 \$1,000 to \$10,000 a year. High grade
 exclusively. Write for plan and booklet.

HAPGOODS

(INCORPORATED)

Suite 509, 309 Broadway, New York

Chicago Office: Monadnock Building

Philadelphia Office: Pennsylvania "

Cleveland Office: Williamson "

STALL'S BOOKS
The Self and Sex Series
 has the unqualified endorsement of

Dr. Joseph Cook	Bishop Vincent
Rev. C. M. Sheldon	Anthony Comstock
Rev. F. B. Meyer	"Fanny"
Dr. Theo. L. Cuyler	Francis E. Willard
Dr. Francis E. Clark	Lady M. Somerset

Eminent Physicians and Hundreds of Others.

LOOKS TO MEN. By Sylvanus Stall, D. D.
WHAT A YOUNG BOY OUGHT TO KNOW.
WHAT A YOUNG MAN OUGHT TO KNOW.
WHAT A YOUNG HUSBAND OUGHT TO KNOW.
WHAT A MAN OF 45 OUGHT TO KNOW.
LOOKS TO WOMEN. By Mrs. Mary Wood-Allen, M. D., and
 Mrs. Emma F. A. Drake, M. D.
WHAT A YOUNG GIRL OUGHT TO KNOW.
WHAT A YOUNG WOMAN OUGHT TO KNOW.
WHAT A YOUNG WIFE OUGHT TO KNOW.
WHAT A WOMAN OF 45 OUGHT TO KNOW.
35 per copy, post free. Send for table of contents.
 R. Walling Publishing Co., 1182 Real Estate Trust Building,
 Philadelphia, Pa.

Learn the truth

SEXOLOGY

Every man and woman, particularly
 those entered upon matrimony, should
 possess the new and valuable book

Sexology

by WILLIAM H. WALLING, A.M., M.D.
 which sensibly treats of the sexual
 relations of both sexes, and, as well, how
 and when to advise son or daughter.
 Unequalled endorsement of the press,
 magistracy, legal, and medical professions.

Do you know that the main cause of un-
 happiness, ill health, sickly
 children, and divorce is admitted by physicians and shown
 by court records to be ignorance of the laws of self and sex?

Sent, post-paid, on receipt of the price.
 Fine Morocco binding, \$1.50; cloth-bound, \$1.00
 Write for "Other People's Opinions" and "Table of Contents,"
 our 100-page illustrated catalogue of books of merit—FREE.

RITAN PUBLISHING CO., Dept. 20, Philadelphia.

The Arbiters of Time

The Earth and
 The Elgin
 keep time
 together



The Elgin Watch

is carried by men whose lives de-
 pend on time. The Elgin watch
 for women, though smaller in
 size, is identical in accuracy.

An illustrated history
 of the watch sent free.

ELGIN NATIONAL WATCH CO.
 Elgin, Ill.

IT WORKED ON HIS FEELINGS.—Continued.



"Now, I'll just open the door suddenly and get the drop on 'em before—"

he YOST TYPEWRITER



Easy Enough
A perfect work
man's a year.

Handsome Enough
The owner is pleased with
the beautiful work.

Easy Enough
The operator is delighted
with the touch.

Catalogue Free.

YOST WRITING MACHINE CO., 245 Broadway, New York.



the HAMMOND

the only Typewriter which enables one to
write, on the same machine, twenty-six languages
over one hundred styles of type.
No other typewriter possesses, in as high a
degree, any one of the following three essential
features

**SPEED EASE OF OPERATION
EXCELLENCE OF WORK**

Writing Machine of Universal Adaptability

THE HAMMOND TYPEWRITER CO.

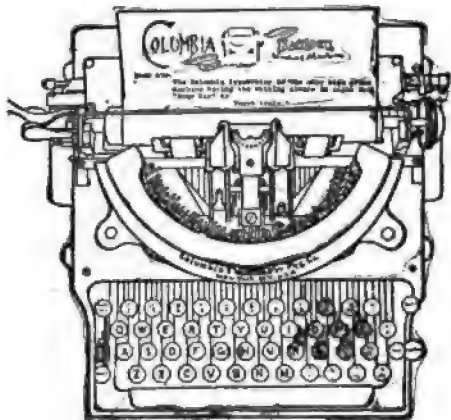
Factory and General Offices, 69th to 70th Sts. East River

NEW YORK, N. Y.

Branch Offices in Principal Cities. Representatives everywhere.

THE RESULT OF Experience, Progress, Public Demand.

**VISIBLE writing without sacrificing durability,
and DURABLE without sacrificing visibility.**



Columbia Typewriter

**IT WILL PLEASE your stenographer and its
NEAT WORK will please your correspondents.**

Write for Catalogue.

COLUMBIA TYPEWRITER MANUFACTURING CO.
39 West 116th Street, NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

TYPEWRITERS ALL
SIZES
All the Standard machines **SOLD** or **RENTED** ANYWHERE
at **HALF MANUFACTURERS' PRICES**. Shipped with
privileges of examination. Send for Catalogue.
TYPEWRITER EMPORIUM, 304 La Salle St., CHICAGO.

IN BUSINESS for yourself; stop working for
others. We start you in profit-
able Order business at your home. Pleasant work;
good profits; unlimited possibilities. Full information
free. **FRANKLIN HOWARD CO., Denver, Colorado.**

REVOLVERS, GUNS, SWORDS, MILITARY
Goods, NEW and old, auctioned to F. Bannerman, 579
B'way, N. Y. Large illustrated 15c catalog mailed for 6c stamps.

THE LOCKE ADDER
Only
Buy a
Locke Adder
to save your brain
CAPACITY 999,999,999
Fastest, simplest, handiest, most practical and durable, low-
priced calculating machine. Adds, Subtracts, Multiplies, Di-
vides. Cannot make mistakes. Computes nine columns sim-
ultaneously. Saves time, labor, brain, and will last a lifetime.
"One should be in every business office."—*Jos Lee Jameson,*
State Revenue Agent, Austin, Texas.
"It is worth its weight in gold."—*Chas. W. Thompson, Spec'l*
Ag't, U. S. Dept. of Labor, Boston, Mass.
Price \$6.00, prepaid in U. S. Booklet free. Agents wanted.
C. E. LOCKE MFG CO., 51 Walnut St., Keosauqua, Iowa.

IT WORKED ON HIS FEELINGS.—Continued.



"Murder! help! slip! bang? I I D——? I ough!"

ALLING AIR AND BALDNESS solutely Cured

is but one way to reason of baldness ing hair, and that is by scopic examination of the hair. The particular disease with our scalp is afflicted must be before it can be intelligently. The use of dandruff cures r tonics, without knowing the cause of your disease, is like medicine without knowing what trying to cure.

and three fallen hairs from combings to Prof. J. H. Austin, celebrated bacteriologist, who send you **ABSOLUTELY FREE** diagnosis of your case, a booklet on of the hair and scalp, and a sam- box of the remedy which he will pre- especially for you.

Enclose 2c postage and write to-day.

PROF. J. H. AUSTIN,
McVicker Building, - CHICAGO, ILL.



The Overland Limited

EXCELLED BY NONE.

Only three days CHICAGO to CALIFORNIA, via

Union Pacific and Southern Pacific

Finest train. Shortest route. Smoothest Roadbed. Daylight ride through Echo Canon, Weber Canon, skirting **Great Salt Lake**, down the Humboldt Valley and over the Wondrously beautiful Sierra Nevadas.

To California

Inquire at

176 Washington Street, Boston
287 Broadway, New York City
822 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

or of

903 Olive Street, St. Louis
53 East Fourth Street, Cincinnati
193 South Clark Street, Chicago

IT WORKED ON HIS FEELINGS.—Continued.

[illegible]



THE SECRET OF A GOOD COMPLEXION

ALL WOMEN WHO DESIRE BEAUTY

Should Embrace this Opportunity to Secure a 60-day Daily Treatment of Dr. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers and Fould's Medicated Arsenic Soap for One Dollar.

If your blood is impure, or if you have pimples, freckles, wrinkles, black-heads, redness of face or nose, a muddy, sallow skin or any blemish whatever on or under the skin, you should procure at once these marvellous beautifiers of the complexion, skin, and form. This ad. must be sent with your order. If you cannot send now, cut this out and send when it is convenient, as this offer will be good any time if ad. is sent with your order. Address

H. B. FOULD, Room 31, 214 Sixth Ave., N. Y. Sold by Druggists Everywhere.

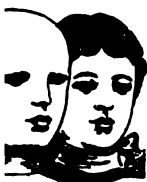


PERFECTION IN BUST AND FIGURE

The Knowledge How to Possess It
YOURS FOR THE ASKING.

Would you have a form second to none, perfectly free from all scrawny and hollow places, and a bust as full, plump, and firm as you could desire? You may easily obtain these inestimable blessings if you write to **Mme. Hastings**, the marvellously successful **Form and Face Specialist**, of Chicago, for her famous system of development, a discovery which vigorously stimulates the developing forces of nature and makes plump all the flat and sunken places and which creates the most fascinating and beautiful curves. It enlarges the bust measure 6 inches and makes the arms and neck plump and round. The **Madame system** is the one praised so highly by leading society women everywhere. It is perfectly harmless and failure is unknown. **Special instructions** are given to this women to gain 15 to 20 lbs. more in weight and round out the entire form. While using this treatment you will receive constant care by mail until you are entirely developed. Prominent physicians highly endorse and prescribe it because of its great superiority over everything else known for physical development. Upon request and a stamp for postage, a package, sealed in a plain wrapper, will be sent you containing beautiful photos and full information how to develop yourself at home. Do not fail to write at once to

MME. HASTINGS, A.D., 59 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.



Free Hair Grower.

A trial package of a new and wonderful remedy mailed free to convince people it actually grows hair, stops hair falling out, removes dandruff and quickly restores luxuriant growth to shining scalps, eyebrows, and eyelashes. Send your name and address to the **Altenheim Medical Dispensary, 9305 Foso Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio**, for a free trial package. A 2c. stamp to cover postage. Write to-day.

EMMA KROND,
veur, Quebec, Can.,
and after using
no Treatment.
A 2c. stamp to cover postage. Write to-day.

DR. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

CANCER CURED

Dr. B. F. Bye's Oils for cancers and tumors are a painless cure. Most cases are treated at home. Send for book telling what wonderful things are being done. Give instant relief from pain. If not afflicted cut this out and send it to some suffering one. **Dr. B. F. BYE, 800 N. Ill. St., Indianapolis, Ind.**

OPIUM MORPHINE and LIQUOR HABITS CURED.

Sanatorium Established 1875. Thousands having failed elsewhere have been cured by us. Treatment can be taken at home. Write The Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. P 3, Lebanon, O.

FREE OX-BLOOD TABLETS

A Three Weeks' Treatment For Thin-Blooded People. Pleasant to take, harmless to the system. They cure Nervousness, Rheumatism, Indigestion. Blood Purifier and Tonic. A great flesh producer. You derive all the benefit and nourishment from these tablets that you would from the pure blood of a healthy bullock. Thin people gain ten pounds a month. It costs you nothing to try them. Better send to-day. We send Tablets prepaid. **W. A. HENDERSON, Dept. L, Clarinda, Iowa.**

AYNE'S EXPECTORANT CURES THE WORST COLDS

IT WORKED ON HIS FEELINGS.—Concluded.



OPENING.—"Pain's blood, Madam, it's only your feelings I'm working on."

READ MACHINE FOR HOUSEHOLD USE



It takes the flour and mixes 10 lbs. of best bread in 3 minutes. Send for Booklet. Agents wanted.

SCIENTIFIC BREAD MACHINE CO.,

(CYRUS CHAMBERS, JR.)

Fifty-second and Media Streets, Philadelphia.

STECK PIANOS

For Forty-six Years

inseparably associated with the highest achievements of musical art.

Used in hundreds of schools and musical institutions because of their exquisite tone qualities and unexcelled durability.

This should be of interest to every intending purchaser of a piano.

Catalogues sent free on application.

GEORGE STECK & CO.

136 Fifth Avenue. New York

'THE OLD RELIABLE'

Golden Grain

As a food product corn is the most nutritious cereal grown. In the heart of the kernel is hidden the very elements of vim and vitality.

In the
new table delicacy—

Karo

CORN SYRUP

*The Great Spread
for Daily Bread*

—the pure extract of corn—is all the goodness of the kernel in a pure form. A table syrup not only delicious but nutritious.—*makes you eat and makes strength.* Good for every home use.

10c., 25c. and 50c. At all grocers.

CORN PRODUCTS CO., New York and Chicago.

THERE WAS SOMETHING DOING.



'imagined I heard some' 'scotin' frough de bushes den.



GOOD NEGATIVES— GOOD PRINTS

UNDER ALL CONDITIONS IF YOU USE

ANSCO and CYKO

Make your negatives on Ansco, the new daylight loading Film. Fits all standard

film cameras. Then use Cyko, the paper that prints by any light. Ansco and Cyko unequalled for latitude in exposure and development.

MANUAL AND BOOKLETS ON REQUEST. ASK YOUR DEALER OR

THE ANTHONY & SCOVILL COMPANY

ATLAS BLOCK
CHICAGO

122-124 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

It's Not a Toss-Up



as to the quality of pictures made with a

KORONA Camera



THERE WAS SOMETHING DOING.—Continued.



"Tilt begins ter look as tho' dey'd be stumpin' doin' ; de dawg, he's on de trail ob stumpin', shuah, pop !



should be stamped on
all your Collars and
Suffs. *Look for it.*

Free Catalogue of Styles and Prices.

Will send any one of our 14 Little Indian Pictures
four (4) cents in stamps, or for fifty (50) cents will
send the whole family of fourteen (14) pictures.

C. CURTIS & CO., 425 River Street, Troy, N.Y.

TO HOLD
THE STOCKINGS UP OR THE
CORSET DOWN

YOU CAN
RELY ON

THE

Velvet Grip

Sample
pair
by mail
25c

CUSHION
BUTTON

**HOSE
SUPPORTER**

If your dealer is "up to date"
he has the popular styles

The Name is on every Loop

GEORGE FROST CO., Makers, Boston, Mass.

"Mid star-crowned, snow-clad peaks."

WINTER IN THE ADIRONDACKS.

If you need a bracing, dry air, filled
with the healthful odor of the balsam
and the fir, you will find it at Saranac
Lake—only twelve hours from New
York or Buffalo, fifteen hours from
Boston, twenty-four hours from Chi-
cago, twenty-one hours from Cincin-
nati, and thirty hours from St. Louis,
by the

NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES.

A copy of No. 20 of the "Four-Track Series"
"The Adirondacks and How to Reach Them," will
be sent free on receipt of a 2-cent stamp by George
H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York
Central E. B., Grand Central Station, New York.

Jaeger
PURE WOOL UNDERWEAR

Protects
Against
Temperature Changes.

**The Standard Sanitary
Underwear for Men, Women
and Children.**

Endorsed by Leading Physicians.

Also various JAEGER Novelties and
Specialties.

Don't forget that the Best is the Cheap-
est and that the First Wealth is Health.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE.

DR. JAEGER & W. S. CO.'S OWN STORES.

NEW YORK: 16 West 23d St.; 155-157 Broadway.
BROOKLYN: 504 Fulton Street.
BOSTON: 230-232 Boylston Street.
PHILADELPHIA: 1510 Chestnut Street.
CHICAGO: 82 State Street.

THERE WAS SOMETHING DOING.—Continued.



44 The party arrived at last at the Hotel. I'll be back in the morning. I'll be back in the morning.

One Night Dispers OLDS and "GRIP" with all debilitating after effects —IF YOU USE ORANGEINE (Powders)

Under simple directions in every package.

NOTE.—Do not neglect colds and upsets, which often cause all-winter weakness. The many who know Orangeine say:
"I have not had a cold or headache in years, which Orangeine did not quickly drive away."

The timely use of Orangeine promptly corrects Headache, Fatigue, Neuralgia, Stomach Upsets, which often lead to serious sickness; insures good health, good spirits, and greatest possible productivity of life's time and energy.

TRIAL PACKAGE FREE.—Orangeine is sold by druggists everywhere in 25c., 50c., and \$1.00 packages. On receipt of request will mail 10c trial package FREE with full directions, composition, description of its wide human influences. Address "Orangeine," 1111 Madison Ave., New York City.

Skin Diseases

If you suffer from Eczema, Salt Rheum, Ringworm, Itch, Acne, or other skin troubles,

Hydrozone

will cure you.

As these diseases are caused by parasites, killing them without causing injury to the healthy tissue cures the trouble. It has cured many cases pronounced incurable and is absolutely safe.

Hydrozone is a scientific Germicide. Used and endorsed by leading physicians. It is absolutely harmless, yet a most powerful healing agent.

Trial bottle at your druggist or by mail on receipt of 25 cents. None genuine without my signature on label.

Prof. Charles Marchand

57 E. Prince St., New York.

The
AL-VISTA



PERFECT "SNAP"
WHY?—BECAUSE

You can take the whole view with one snap, or, with some models, stop the lens at five different angles, and thus make five different widths of pictures, all depending on just how much of the view you wish. These are features no other camera possesses.

OUR CO-OPERATIVE PLAN

We now send you any camera described in our catalogue upon a small payment being made. The remainder you may pay in monthly instalments while you are using the camera. Write for full information about this.

MULTISCOPE & FILM CO.
106 Jefferson Street, BURLINGTON, WIS.

Many Questions Answered

BY BOOKS AND BOOKLETS
ISSUED BY THE

Southern Pacific

ABOUT ROUTES AND RATES
TO ALL POINTS IN

LOUISIANA, TEXAS, NEW AND OLD
MEXICO, ARIZONA, AND CALIFORNIA

COLONIST RATES, \$39.00 TO \$49.75,
UNTIL NOVEMBER 29, 1903

Inquire at

170 Washington Street, Boston
349 Broadway, New York City
109 South Third Street, Philadelphia
109 East Baltimore Street, Baltimore
129 South Franklin Street, Syracuse
L. H. NUTTING, G. E. P. A., New York City
E. O. McCORMICK, P. T. M., San Francisco, Cal.
T. J. ANDERSON, G. P. A., Houston, Texas

THERE WAS SOMETHING DOING.—Continued.



"For the last's sake, hit's a bear cub! I'll just get the drop on 'em before' de ole one

Provident

LIFE AND TRUST
CO., PHILADELPHIA

W. CORNER FOURTH
AND CHESTNUT STREETS
(NOS. 401-409)

Evidence of the skilful and faithful management of this company is found in its exceedingly low expense rate, and the remarkably favorable rate of mortality. For the whole period of its existence, the death rate has been only sixty-one per cent. of the rate indicated by the authoritative tables.

The organization of the company affords a strong guaranty of safe management for the future. There is the same need for care and intelligent discrimination in selecting a life insurance company that there is in selecting investments for a trust fund. The question of the first importance in either case is the question of absolute security.

Persons contemplating insurance are invited to address the company for rates and general information.

Send to-day for the

New White House Calendar 1904

Four sheets, each 9 x 12 inches. Exterior and interior views of the new White House and grounds. Also pictures from life of the President, Mrs. Roosevelt, Miss Alice Roosevelt and the *children*.

**50 CENTS.
NO ADVERTISING.
IN COLORS.**

White House Calendar Company

(Incorporated.)

1040 Fine Arts Building, CHICAGO, ILL.

Distributors and Agents wanted throughout the world.

She Knows

A wife recognizes a good husband by the kind and quantity of life insurance he carries. Kind, the best; quantity, \$100,000, in the

PENN MUTUAL LIFE

921-3-5 CHESTNUT STREET

PHILADELPHIA

Send for (free) descriptive booklets. We do business through correspondence.



A piano player in a home adds much to the life of that home, provided that the player is a perfect musical instrument.

The reason that the

CHASE & BAKER PIANO PLAYER

is found in so many music-loving homes is because it gives the performer a greater opportunity to express his own individual feeling in music, while at the same time giving greater technical accuracy to the playing than any other piano player. *Send for Booklet.*

THE CHASE & BAKER COMPANY

BUFFALO, N. Y.

New York Salesroom: 236 Fifth Avenue.

THERE WAS SOMETHING DOING. —Continued.



"CONTINUED." "H. B. 1871"



Indians of the Southwest

Where they live and how to get there—their homes, handicraft and ceremonies—an intensely interesting book of more than two hundred pages—written by Geo. A. Dorsey, Ph.D., Curator of Anthropology, Field Columbian Museum, an authority on the "Amerind"—profusely illustrated with half-tones from special photos—handsome cover in colors—sent anywhere on receipt of fifty cents—valuable for schoolroom or library. Address General Passenger Office, A. T. & S. F. Ry. Co., Chicago.

A POSTAL CARD

us will bring you full information regarding our successful plan for the purchase of speculative and investment stocks whereby a profit is assured and loss of money absolutely impossible. No expense to the investor. Send no money to stock companies until you have seen our free booklet. **WELTNER & DUNN CORPORATION, 32 Broadway, New York City.**

REVOLVERS, GUNS, SWORDS, MILITARY Goods, NEW and old, auctioned to F. Bannerman, 579 B'way, N. Y. Large illustrated 15c catalog mailed for 6c stamps.

WE HAVE WORK FOR YOU HONEST Home Work Employment. Thirteen dollars Monthly for one hour daily. Outfit free. 6000 persons now employed. Address **WOMAN'S OPPORTUNITY CO., Toronto, Canada.**

For SOUPS

Tabasco Sauce

The Perfect Seasoning for SOUPS, SALADS, OYSTERS, CLAMS, FISH, SAUCES, ROASTS, GRAVIES, ETC.

Indispensable for table and in kitchen. Imparts delicious flavor. Assures good digestion. Purer and more healthful than ground pepper.

THE ORIGINAL McILHENNY'S TABASCO used in leading Hotels, Clubs, and Restaurants nearly half a century. A. T. & S. F. Ry. Co.

FREE—Write for "Tabasco Book"—Unique Recipes. **McILHENNY'S TABASCO, NEW IBERIA, LA.**

4 FULL QUART BOTTLES \$3.00

Of the finest WHISKY on the market. 10 YEARS OLD and guaranteed to please.

Old Settlers Club.

A well-known brand that other houses charge \$6 for, but which, by reason of an immense trade and our anxiety to secure new customers, we offer at \$3, express prepaid. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. We will include a Bottle of Blackberry Brandy Free with first order of \$3 or more. Send for price list of other liquors and cordials. Mention this paper when ordering.

CHICAGO TABLE SUPPLY CO. 260-264 STATE ST. CHICAGO, ILL.

I CAN SELL YOUR Real Estate

No matter where it is or what it is worth. Send description, state price and learn my wonderfully successful plan.

W. M. OSTRANDER

280 NORTH AMERICAN BUILDING, PHILADELPHIA

SORE EYES Dr. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

INDIANAPOLIS COMBINATION TABLE

Billiard—Pool—Library—Dining

Best value ever offered. Elegant selected oak—Antwerp finish. Library or Dining Table with top on—Billiard and Pool Table when top is removed. Equipped with complete Billiard and Pool outfit of regulation quality throughout. One dozen styles Combination Billiard or Pool Tables, \$30.00 to \$150.00. Freight prepaid. Ask for our illustrated catalogue. It's FREE.

COMBINATION BILLIARD MFG. CO.

31-41 INGALLS - - - INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

Size
Standard
3 ft. x 6 ft.

Strongly
Constructed
and
Beautifully
Finished

\$30 to \$150

Quickest
Sold Rubber
Cushions

Best Vermont
Slate Bed

French
Billiard Cloth

THERE WAS SOMETHING DOING.—Concluded.



.. Well, ef dat ain't seem' lone! I nebber knowed de gun ter kink liken dat before."



OUR FOURTH OF JULY EDITORIAL

(From the Calamity Creek Courier)

FOR reasons that we shall mention the editorial which generally graces the pages of this progressive paper at this patriotic season has been crowded out.

In the interest of news last week, it will be remembered, we were compelled to pollute the purity of our columns by referring to Lysander Buggins, the lop-eared ground-hog who insults the intelligence of this community with a ruffianly rag called a paper, and printed on a mangle (when he's sober) in a cellar down the street. We then informed our readers that this hoary-headed hyena had cut off his wife's hair during the night and sold it for a demijohn of rum to Dago Pete, who conducts the Elite Emporium. We might have added that a spell later the bow-legged jack-rabbit was caught trying to dispose of some fireworks (presented to his unfortunate children by parties what he'd blackmailed) in order to continue his orgy.

It seems that the remarks which we published in the interest of truth and justice riled this cayuse some few.

We was therefor not much took aback on our publication day, and jest as we was in the act of setting the last line of our chaste and patriotic Fourth-of-July editorial, to find the composing-room smell sudden like a dog show and a distillery, and, looking up, see Old Man Buggins standing as well as he could in the doorway.

This living picture of the needs of a Board of Health (which this paper has never ceased to urge) had a cavalry saber between his teeth, a Derringer in each hand, and a couple of bayonets sticking out of the tops of his boots. We ducks jest in time when he opens fire with both guns to once.

They didn't do no harm 'cept lop off the ear of the office cat and the nose from the plaster cast of Senator Boojum that set on a shelf, but being in a corner we see that soon he would have the drop on us unless we could retaliate in kind.

They was an old blunderbuss setting in this corner loaded with powder and rock salt, but it would have been a poor defence again the armory he carried. It grieved us to have to break off from putting the finishing touches to our chaste composition by this horned toad, but we were shorely up against a hard proposition. Then one of them idees ye get once in a lifetime or so seizes us. We picks up the column of editorial we'd set up and rams it down into that gun.

He was taking aim at us again, when we lets the old snorter loose, and the hull charge catches him jest below the decanter stopper he stole from the Red Light Saloon and wears in his shirt for a diming.

Whether it was the choice language contained in that Editorial (and

shorely such chaste language and lofty sediments never found lodgement in that wuthless carcass afore), he lets off a whoop like a digger injun that had sot on a rattlesnake and takes a header down the stairs that landed him on his head in the street all spraddled out.

We never expected to hear from this grave-robber again, but there ain't no sounding the depths of some critters' depravity. Why, with the help of Doc Sniffins he worked all night removing that editorial from his midst, and published it in the Fourth-of-July edition of *The Cowpuncher* as his own production. Is there any tree-limbs round here capable of sustaining an extra load of crime? If so we can help supply it.

LEMUEL JESWICK,

Editor *Clamity Creek Courier*.

E. D. Pierson.

President
Roosevelt's
Dutch

THIS is a story never before published concerning President Roosevelt, and written by a man who was on the train during the President's campaigning tour when he occupied the special place on the national ticket. A party from Denver met the special at Wagon to escort it through Colorado on a four-days' trip. Colonel Roosevelt had returned, full of vigor and life, from an exciting ride with his Rough Riders. As soon as he entered the car he leaped joyfully half a dozen times, toward the ceiling at every jump, and singing at the top of his voice:

"Oh, the Irish and the Dutch,
Why, they don't amount to much,
But hooray
For the Scandahoovian!"

"Let me publish that, Colonel," requested a press representative.

"Don't you do it!" promptly commanded Colonel Roosevelt. "It's only a joke, and, besides, I'm Dutch myself."

Henry Edward Warner.

WHEN THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

By S. C. Stunts

Don't it kind o' sort o' cheer you,
Don't it drive away each frown,
When you hear the bands a-playin',
When the circus comes to town?

Don't your stiff ol' knees feel springy
When you're thinkin' of the clown,
An' the folks that does the tumblin',
When the circus comes to town?

Then you load up the ol' wagon,
Pack it full an' load it down.
How the children's faces brighten
When the circus comes to town!

" Cleanliness of body was ever esteemed to proceed from a due reverence to God, to society and to ourselves."

Bacon



From the end of the 18th. Century
to the beginning of the 20th.

PEARS' SOAP

has been popularly recognised
as the clean and cleansing soap.

Walnuts and Wine

An' your daughter with her teller
 Looks so sweet in her new gown,
 That he thinks he'll "pop" most likely,
 When the circus comes to town.

An' you sit an' watch the actors,
 An' you hear the band's harsh soun',
 An' you feel like doin' somethin',
 When the circus comes to town.

An' it kind o' seems that Heaven,
 With the angels flyin' roun',
 Can't show faces happier'n they be
 When the circus comes to town.

**An Internal
 Explosion**

HER name was Lucretia, but everybody called her "Creesh." She was a negress in Evanston, and she earned a comfortable living by washing for the students. She was an active member of the African Methodist Church, and her voice was often heard in testimony at the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting, which was a kind of class-meeting and prayer-meeting combined.

On one such occasion she was in a particularly happy mood. She clapped her hands and shouted, "Glory! I's done got my feet onto de Rock. I's done learn' de new song of salvation. I's done seen de great Light. De fac' is, de Mornin' Star has busted in my heart!"

Charles S. Albertson.

Freckle-Proof

LITTLE MARIE hated freckles, and with good reason, for she was like the proverbial turkey-egg. Her small nurse, Rhody, was as black as tar, except her beautiful white teeth.

One day Marie said regretfully, "Wisht I was black like you, Rhody; ain't nowhere for you to get freckles 'cept your teeth."

Florida C. Orr.

**Fredrika
 Bremer and
 the American
 Mechanic**

THE late Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth was a splendid raconteur, and could tell a story about as well as she could write one, often entertaining her guests at her famous Sunday teas with reminiscences of her literary friends of former days. She once told me the following story of Fredrika Bremer, the Swedish novelist:

Miss Bremer visited this country to gather material for her books, and was a guest of Mrs. Southworth at Prospect Cottage during her stay in Washington. She was already the author of several books that had preceded her through the admirable translations of Mary Howitt, and insured an enthusiastic welcome, that made her feel at home although in a strange land, and being also, at the time, a spinster of what would be called in America "the uncertain age," as well as quite an independent thinker, she was travelling alone.

SENT FREE

Choice Recipes by MISS PARLOA & other noted Teachers



TRADE-MARK

A BOOKLET of 80 pages. Will tell you how to make a great variety of Delicious Drinks and Dainty Dishes from the famous COCOA and CHOCOLATE of

WALTER BAKER & CO. Ltd.

Established 1780

DORCHESTER, MASS.

40 HIGHEST AWARDS IN
EUROPE AND AMERICA

"En route from New York she made a short stop in Philadelphia," said Mrs. Southworth, "and I think I never saw anyone laugh as she did when she told me her experience on that short run between those two cities. When she entered the car nearly every seat was taken, but she found a place next one occupied by a young mechanic. The gentry of Sweden are a privileged class, and what might be considered impertinent under other circumstances becomes quite proper in their intercourse with the working-class, so Fredrika addressed the young man as unconcernedly as she would in Sweden, and, feeling a friendly interest in such a manly looking fellow, so different from his class in her own country, began plying him with questions, thus:

" 'What is your name?'

" 'Jonathan Brewster, Mum.'

" 'How old are you?'

" 'Just twenty-four, Mum.'

" 'Are your parents living?'

" 'No, Mum.'

" 'Have you any brothers and sisters?'

" 'Not a one, Mum.'

" 'Are you married?'

" 'No, Mum.'

" 'What work do you do?'

" 'I am a bricklayer, Mum.'

" 'How much do you make at your trade?'

" 'Two dollars a day, Mum.'

" 'You do not drink, I hope?'

" 'Oh, no, Mum! I'm a teetotal.'

" 'I did not think you looked like you drank,' she said encouragingly. Then, having shown a proper interest in this promising plebeian, she relapsed into silence, and began viewing the landscape from the window on the opposite side of the car, thus turning her face away from him. But she was soon recalled by a preparatory 'hem!' and looking around, this volley was fired at her:

" 'What is your name, Mum?'

" 'How old are you, Mum?'

" 'Are your folks all living?'

" 'Are you married, Mum?'

" 'What work do you do, Mum?'

" 'How much do you make, Mum?'

"And so on through the whole list, while Fredrika good-naturedly replied, thinking all the while what a queer set of understrappers we had in this country.

"Arrived at Philadelphia, the young fellow would have taken her satchel to escort her to her destination, but Fredrika declined his services, to his evident chagrin, and, calling a conveyance, gave orders to be taken to her hotel, nodding a friendly good-by to the young bricklayer as she drove away.

"But that was not the end of it. Soon after dinner a waiter came to Miss Bremer's room and told her that a young man wanted to see her.

" 'I know no one here,' she said in surprise, 'and I think there is some mistake.'

THE EQUITABLE

HENRY B. HYDE
FOUNDER

J.W.ALEXANDER
PRESIDENT



J.H.HYDE
VICE PRESIDENT

YOUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

is signed when you
become the holder of an Endowment
policy in the Equitable.

It gives you freedom from worry
about either your own future—or
the future of your family.

It provides for yourself—if you
live, and for your family—if you die.

Vice-pres in every State for men of energy and character to act as representatives.

Apply to **GAGE E. TARBELL, 2nd Vice President**

Send this coupon for particulars, or write

THE EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY of the United States
120 Broadway, New York Dept. No. 10

Please send me information regarding an Endowment for \$.....

If issued at years of age.

Name.....

Address.....

" 'He said he came over with you from New York,' said the lackey, 'and his name is Jonathan Brewster.'

" 'Oh, oh!' laughed Fredrika, 'it is the young mechanic. Well, tell him I am very tired, and he really must excuse me.'

"The waiter departed with her message, and Fredrika was just composing herself, in a great armchair, to a good rest and her dreams, when a rap called her to the door again, and there stood the proprietor himself.

" 'Miss Bremer, that young chap downstairs refuses utterly to go. He says he knows you never tried to send him away, for you are wanting to marry him.'

" 'What an idea!' Fredrika exclaimed.

" 'He gave as his reason,' the proprietor went on, 'that you inquired most particularly as to his circumstances, and whether he was married or not, and told him you were single also. And you told him you were making a lot of money; so, after thinking it over, he concluded it would be better for him to live in Sweden with a wife who could make so much money than to work like a slave here for two dollars a day.'

"As soon as Miss Bremer could stop laughing she explained the matter to her landlord, and begged him to get rid of this persistent suitor. Which he did—with the aid of the police."

Margaret Sullivan Burke.

A State of Nature

OUR English cousins use "left off" for our "cast off" as applied to second-hand garments. The following ad. recently appeared in a London paper: "Mr. and Mrs. Hardy have left off clothing of all kinds. They can be seen any day from three to six P.M."

Julia I. Patton.

External Fitness

WHEN Katharine was six years of age and a school-girl her uncle, who had resided in another city, died, and her father and mother went to attend the funeral, which was to be held on a certain afternoon at two o'clock. Katharine was at school on the day appointed for the obsequies. Looking at the clock, she suddenly, much to the surprise of the children and teacher, burst into tears.

Teacher, all sympathy, went to Katharine's side to learn the cause of her grief.

"What is the trouble, dear?" she asked the small maiden.

"Oh!" replied Katharine, "my uncle is being buried, and I," extending her feet, "have on *tan* shoes!"

Della Hine Mertz.

Locating Jonah

It was on a street of Camden, Arkansas, that Sambo met his colored brother Joseph.

"Hello, Joe," said he, "wher y'all be'n this ev'nin'?"

"I be'n to chu'ch, that's wher I be'n."

"What y'all leahn theh?"



Purity Personified

No other soap leaves such a sense of freshness and cleanliness as Lifebuoy Soap. Use it any way you wish and you will find it has unusual and exceptional properties. It not only cleanses like magic but also safeguards the health, as it disinfects—purifies, at the same time. Buy a cake and use it all up and if not all we say of, dealer will promptly refund purchase money.

"What I leahn theh? I leahn 'bout Jonah, tha's what I leahn."

"Huh! Jonah. Huh! Who dat Jonah?"

"He de man what swaller de whale. Dat who Jonah is."

"Swaller de whale. Huh! Wheh dat Jonah come f'om?"

"He come f'om Vaginny, I reckon. Wheffohe you askin' dat?"

"F'om Vaginny. Huh! I reckon dat jes' so. Dem big-mouf Vaginny niggahs always was h——l on fish."

And sniffing contemptuously, the unregenerate Sambo went his wicked way.

John Swain.

A SEASIDE EPISODE

By Lawrence Porcher Hext

We strolled upon the shifting sands;
I ardently addressed her;
I gained possession of her hands,
And timidly caressed her.

We watched the moonbeams kiss the brine;
Then, bashfulness dismissing,
I pressed her rose-red lips to mine,
And—found her fond of kissing.

My arm had wandered 'round her waist,
And there I let it linger,
The while I placed, with modest haste,
A ring upon her finger.

We were engaged, but quickly fled
My dream of earthly heaven,
For, jotting down my name, she said,
"Your number's twenty-seven."

**What's in
a Name**

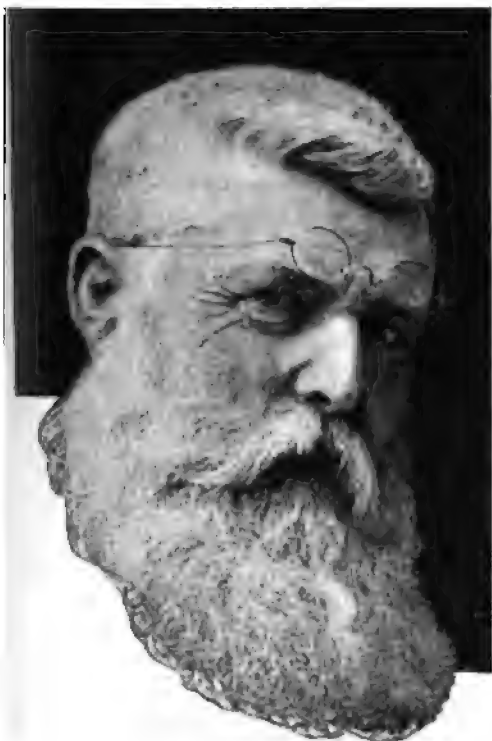
NEAR the little town of Apex, in North Carolina, lives "Uncle Nick" Lewis. The seventy-six years of his life have been spent upon the fifty acres of land where his home is now located.

Classing himself as a "poor white," and utterly ignorant in letters, his character, nevertheless, reflects that independence which led his ancestors one hundred and fifty years ago to leave England and settle in a wilderness—the site now occupied by this very community—and, later, to fight for American independence.

His own independence is manifest in his living, his religion, and his politics.

In lands, houses, and cattle few of his neighbors are as poor; but in wealth of contentment, happiness, and lack of ambition he is easily the richest among them.

He has avoided debt and has had little need for money. His hours of



SAVING UP FOR OLD AGE



**MONEY NOT THE ONLY
THING TO PUT BY**

POVERTY in old age is pitiable, but how much sadder is broken health. Proper food in youth insures health in old age. But if the body is sluggish with wrong food or drink, good health cannot result. Many are wise with money but wasteful of health.

You cannot save money if you squander it nor save health if you waste it. More health is wasted on improper food and drink than in any other way. Coffee and tea contain strong drugs that directly affect the heart and other organs and the nerves. They have ruined many, and hurt nearly all who drink them. Sometimes coffee tears down tissue so rapidly that its ill effects are shown almost as soon as drinking it is begun. In others, it works so slowly that years pass before collapse. In a few, it apparently works no harm, and these are held up to the world by the unthinking as proof positive that "Coffee does not hurt."

Wrong nine times out of ten, for not more than one person in ten can drink coffee and not suffer. To prove this, see how many coffee drinkers you can find who are perfectly well. Maybe you have tried to stop and failed, because there are two ways and you tried the wrong one.

Get a package of **POSTUM FOOD COFFEE** (which is made from the purest cereals) and carefully read directions. Make it strong, boil it thoroughly, serve it hot. It is then a rich seal brown. Add sugar and cream and it becomes a tempting golden brown in color. The aroma is appetizing, so is the taste. It does not taste exactly like coffee. The flavor is original, and you will soon grow to like it for this. You can drink it at all meals, certain that it will give you health, strength, and vigor. It will steady and quiet your nerves and induce sweet natural sleep, not from any drug, but from food which Nature calls for and is quiet when supplied. That's why a well-fed baby sleeps well.

Coffee injures nine out of ten.

POSTUM positively does restore health and vigor to the nervous coffee wreck.

work have always been regulated by himself—not too many, and judiciously distributed. The early morning dew upon his cotton and corn and potato plants for him never did hold a pleasant greeting; the noonday sun ever shone too hot upon his back; and when the shining heavenly body, an hour before sinking from view, cast a pleasant shade on the eastern side of his cabin, then the tobacco from his patch near the house was always freest in its consolation. “Mannyfack” is tabooed, and his own “weed,” with no other treatment than a drying in the sunlight, would be preferred to the finest Havana imported.

In church-membership he is a Baptist, but wherever a church-bell rings, regardless of creed, there Uncle Nick worships.

In politics oftenest, perhaps, a Democrat, yet when his common-sense views, enlightened by intelligence derived from discussions around the town stores on Saturday afternoons, connect best with those of Republican or Populist or independent candidate, he votes the way his judgment points with the utmost catholicity.

But Uncle Nick has one prejudice, and this is against the tomato. He never owned a dog: he does not hold them in high esteem, and it would be one more mouth to feed; “but if,” says he, “I had a dog, and he should eat tee’-mart-usses, I would kill him.” And “tee’-mart-us” plants have never fairly showed their heads above his ground.

One day in a store of Apex his friend Charlie, the clerk, informed him that he had seeds to give away of a new vegetable, much more prolific and profitable than the potato, and urged him to take enough of “tommytoe”-seed to plant half an acre.

This he did.

Not in a rage, nor yet in anger, but an honest, a proud, and an independent spirit broken, with a lifelong prejudice surreptitiously overcome, Uncle Nick in June made his way to the store to see Charlie.

“Charlie,” he said, “what did you want to do that for? Afore God, it’s the first time one of them things has ever been on my farm, and I have dug them all up. You said they was tommytoes, but they ain’t nothing in the world but old tee’-mart-usses!”

Percy J. Olive.

A Misnomer A VERY pompous woman attempted to leave a car while it was in motion, and the little conductor detained her with the usual,—

“Wait until the c-a-a-r sthops, leddy!”

“Don’t address me as ‘lady,’ sir!” she said haughtily.

“I beg your pardon, Ma’am, but we are all liable to mek mistakes,” was the immediate reply.

M. W.

TH’ “FRESH AIR”

By Truman Roberts Andrews

Down ’t th’ city’s my Aunt Jane
(You have to git there on th’ train),
An’ she sent up th’ city kid—
Slickest thing she ever did.

Nothing Secret about Orangeine Powders—

*Its composition is as open as its results are prompt,
and is published in direction booklet in every package.*

NOTE The varied and numerous uses of Orangeine have been evolved "by Humanity for Humanity," and its wide claims would seem ridiculous were they not suggested and sustained by countless human experiences.

The Principle of Orangeine.

Orangeine combines both schools of medicine, and illustrates the following great principle now advocated by all progressive physicians, viz.: *The concerted, concordant action of remedies skillfully selected and combined, is vastly greater than the action of the same remedies, alternately prescribed.*

What Orangeine Is Doing for Humanity.

Orangeine supplies almost instant relief from pain, prompt correction for the little ills which lead to serious ailment, and a gradual, far reaching reconstructive power from extreme physical debility, and the stubborn symptoms which cause chronic ailments.

Orangeine Applications Widely Demonstrated.

**Heat Prostration,
Stomach Upsets,
Bowel Troubles,
Indigestion,
Dyspepsia,**

**Headache (all kinds)
Neuralgia,
Nervousness,
Sea Sickness,
Car Sickness,**

**Hay Fever,
Asthma,
Colds,
Grip,
Fatigue,**

and a host of common ailments.

Orangeine Dispels Hay Fever.

During the past five years, Orangeine has made a phenomenal record for the relief of Hay Fever, in even most stubborn and long continued cases. Thousands of former sufferers have, through Orangeine, found immunity which they could not find at any Hay Fever resort, and our advice has been everywhere confirmed to Hay Fever sufferers, to "Stay at Home or Go Anywhere," provided they TAKE Orangeine, under our simple directions.

A Few Suggestive Experiences.

Mr. J. A. Waldron, Managing Editor of *The New York Dramatic Mirror*, says: "I am not only a steady user of 'Orangeine' Powders, being of an age when their singular and admirable stimulating powers prove very beneficial, and being also subject to Hay Fever in summer and Grip in winter; but I have formed the philanthropic habit of dispensing them to friends, for various temporary ailments which 'Orangeine' so accurately reaches."

"From my experience, I predict that the wonders of 'Orangeine' are yet in their infancy."

P. J. Cunningham, Leslie, Mich., writes: "'Orangeine' is the only remedy that has given me any relief from 'hay fever,' and I have tried a great number."

Mr. Frank T. Bliss, of Morris, Ill., describes his experience: "I have been a sufferer from hay fever for over twenty years, have tried every remedy obtainable, but until this year I have been compelled to spend the hay fever season in northern Michigan. I have been enabled to stay at home this year with perfect freedom from this dread disease by using 'Orangeine' powders as directed."

Mr. O. J. Carpenter, Killduff, Ia., writes: "'Orangeine' has certainly helped me. Have been using it for 'hay fever.'"

Miss Nella Miles, Stockton, N.Y., writes: "I find 'Orangeine' very good for 'hay fever.'"

Miss Hattie McClelland, Madison, Ind., writes: "Have taken four powders a day, and am getting along fine. Have had only slight attack of 'hay fever' so far, and am perfectly free from it to today, something that has never happened before at this season of the year."

Mr. Conrad Rockel, Dallas City, Ill., writes: "'Orangeine' is doing me much good. I think two boxes more will keep 'hay fever' off entirely."

Mrs. J. E. Lansing, Marshall, Mich., writes: "I find it the best thing I ever tried, and I have tried everything."

Miss Bernice Dutton, Little Rock, Ark., writes: "Orangeine makes one feel more like working. More like living. The powders are so simple, so easy to take, so convenient to carry, and yet so effective."

Trial Package Free

Orangeine is sold by druggists everywhere in 25c, 50c and \$1.00 packages. On receipt of request we will mail 10c trial package Free with full directions, composition and description of its wide human influences. Address "Orangeine, Chicago."

Walnuts and Wine

Ain't no grass, she said, ner flowers
 Where he lived, ner air like ours.
 Said she thought we ought to share,
 Me 'n that "Fresh Air."

He was peaked-like an' thin
 When he come—it was a sin,
 Gran'ma said—but 'twasn't long
 'Fore his clo'es was fittin' wrong.
 Ought to seen him eat; you'd just
 Thought that kid was goin' to bust;
 We most eat th' cupboard bare,
 Me 'n that "Fresh Air."

Gee! we had jes' loads of fun,
 Couldn't tell you all we done;
 Fished th' brook an' ketched some whales,
 Tied tin cans on th' old cows' tails,
 Smoked some cigareets one day:
 Gran'pop ketched us in th' hay.
 We got "strap" in that affair,
 Me 'n that "Fresh Air."

Gran'pop's gittin' old, I guess;
 Somehow he didn't seem to jes'
 Like that kid, an' usto say,
 "How long's that imp goin' to stay?"
 An' was tickled nearly dead
 When th' kid was gone, an' said
 We made 'bout th' *darndest* pair,
 Me 'n that "Fresh Air."

'S kind o' lonesome since he went,
 Nothin' don't seem worth a cent;
 Ain't no fun in anything
 All alone. I wisht they'd bring
 Him back, an' let him stay fer good.
 Be a picnic ef they would:
 Reck'n we'd make Gran'pop swear,
 Me 'n that "Fresh Air."

A Martyr to
 the Cause

I WAS sitting on the veranda of the hotel of Grant Centre, when
 a boy came running up the street and shouted breathlessly:
 "They're comin'! They're comin'! They're 'most here!"

At this cry the whole neighborhood awoke to life. Men hurried up from
 all directions, and the storekeepers came to their doors. Then more boys came
 down the street, all with the same cry: "They're comin'! They're comin'!"

A Prescription for all PAIN

A prescription that for 60 years has been alleviating the sufferings of mankind as nothing else can. That has withstood *all* tests; conquered *all* imitators; overcome *all* substitutes. POND'S EXTRACT is a prescription THAT CURES—stops *all* pain and starts the healing instantly. It does it with an efficacy no other remedy in the world possesses. There is nothing like it. It CURES because it contains the pure extract of the most valuable anodyne (pain relief) known in materia medica.

If You Want a Cure That's Safe and Sure

you want POND'S EXTRACT—it CURES. Don't expect a substitute to cure. Water WON'T cure. That's why ordinary witch hazel is so cheap—*it's nearly all water*—that's why it WON'T cure.

For burns, scalds, wounds, inflammation, rheumatism, neuralgia; for cuts, bruises, lameness, soreness, strains, sprains, sunburn, chafing, insect bites and stings, irritation after shaving, get POND'S EXTRACT. It is the *pure* extract of *Hamamelis Virginica*, combined with other pain relieving ingredients—that's why

IT CURES

Sold only in sealed bottles,
enclosed in buff wrappers.

"Circus in town?" I asked the landlord.

"No, no," he said. "But you wait and you'll see some fun. I've got to be going myself." With that he left me and disappeared into the hotel.

A wild shout arose in the street. I looked up and saw a strange group approaching. It consisted of an old man, tall and erect for all his long white beard, and five or six severe-looking, elderly women. Walking slowly and solemnly, as if to the gallows, they came up to the hotel and turned and mounted the steps. Then the crowd, which had been gathering, made a rush and swung in behind them, almost treading on their heels. I kept my seat, and the whole procession, principals and all, brushed past me and entered the barroom of the hotel. Wondering what it could all mean, I arose and followed.

When I found myself inside I saw the landlord standing sedately behind the bar in an immaculate white linen coat. The old man and the women walked straight up to him. Without a movement of his face the landlord set out a black bottle and a glass. The old man took the bottle and poured himself out an unmistakable amber liquid.

"Fill it up!" called a man at my side, and "Fill it up!" "Make him fill it up!" echoed a dozen other voices.

By way of answer the old man turned around and held up the glass, full to the brim. Then impressively he drank it off. Immediately one of the women handed him a glass of water, another patted him on the back, and the others sighed and groaned in helpless distress. And then they all marched slowly through the crowd to the door without paying the slightest attention to the hoots and cat-calls that went up on all sides.

After the crowd had melted away and the landlord had rejoined me on the veranda, I asked for an explanation of what I had just seen. He chuckled to himself for a long time before he could find voice to begin.

"Oh, that was nothing," he said at last. "That happens every day. That old feller was Deacon Weatherbone, and those women belong to the temperance society. The Deke's a great temperance man too—didn't seem so a while ago, but it's true, and that's how he came to take that drink. Kinder mixed up, I know, but I'll tell you all about it.

"You see, last election the Deke was hanging 'round outside the voting-place, tackling everybody to vote the Prohibition ticket, and argifying something powerful. Well, along came old Bill Todd, and the Deke went up to him. Now, Bill had a few election drinks in him and he started argifying back at the Deke. A big crowd got around them, and that put Bill right on his dignity, and he threw it into the Deke for all he was worth.

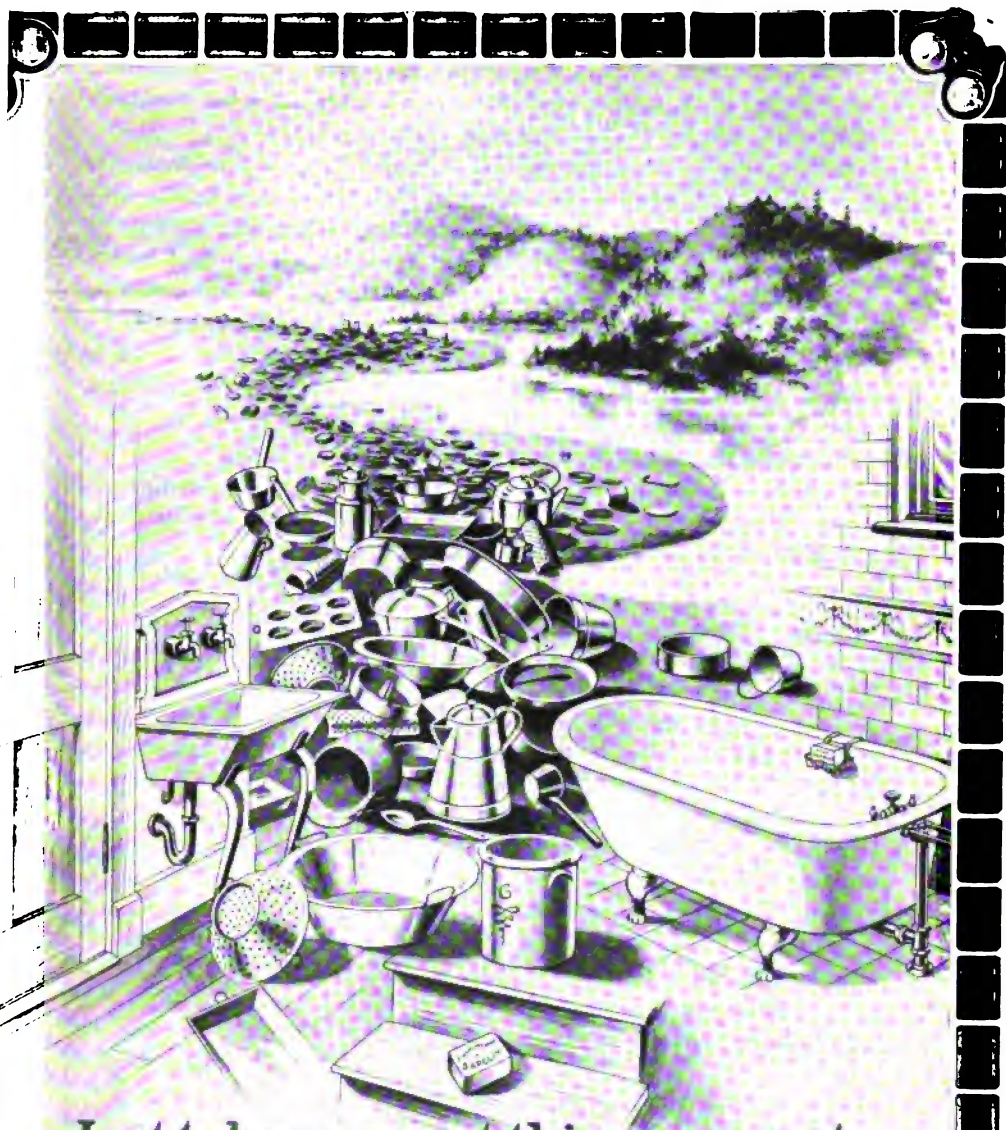
"So after a bit, 'Deke,' he says, 'your man ain't got no show of being elected. Suppose I did vote for him, it'd be just wasting my vote.'

"That made the Deke hot. 'Is that so?' he says. 'Well, who are you going to vote for, anyway?'

"'Me?' says Bill, throwing out his chest. 'I'm going to vote for the party what'll elect the next President. I'm going to vote Socialist-Labor.'

"'Huh,' says the Deke, 'and you talking about wasting your vote.'

"Then it was Bill's turn to get hot. 'Say,' he says, 'I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll bet you that we get more votes right here in Grant Centre than you do. Bet you ten dollars.'



Just take a peep at this prospect,
and you'll notice with delight-that

SAPOLIO
CLEANS AND POLISHES
'most everything in sight

" 'Sorry I never bet,' says the Deke, ' 'cause it's easy money.' "

" 'You're 'fraid,' says Bill; ' but seeing it's you, I'll make you another propersishun. If you get more votes in this town than we do, I'll swear off for a year, and if you don't, I want you to take a good, stiff drink of whiskey at the hotel every day for the same time. Is it a go? "

" Well, the Deke thought it over and it seemed a sure way to get Bill to sign the pledge. He didn't suppose that more than two or three men in town would vote like Bill was going to; and, of course, he couldn't back down before the crowd. So he took the bet up. Then everybody passed the word 'round, and a lot of fellers went up and voted Socialist-Labor just to have a joke on the Deke. And when they came to count up, Bill's man was 'way ahead.

" The Deke has been paying up the bet like a man ever since. A lot of women always come along with him. They think he's a noble hero, and that whiskey is something like boiling kerosene."

" But does the Deacon think so? " I asked.

" Well," said the landlord, " I can't say. But it's surely affecting his memory. Why, sometimes he comes here in the morning and has his drink, and then forgets all about it and comes again after dinner."

Emanuel Lissner.

Hard on the Lawyers

JUDGE WILSON'S little magistrate's office was filled to overflowing when the case of Paul Davis *vs.* Tom Cottin was called. It was a damage suit which involved the payment of fifteen dollars.

The jurors had been selected, the witnesses examined, and the arguments on both sides had been presented. The old Judge, lifting his glasses above his eyes, then charged the jury in substance as follows:

" Gentlemen of the jury, if you believe what the lawyers for the plaintiff have said, you will find the defendant guilty. If, on the other hand, you believe what the lawyers for the defendant have said, you will find the defendant not guilty. But in case, gentlemen of the jury, you happen, as I do in this particular case, not to believe what either side has said, the Court is not competent to charge you as to what you shall do. The law is silent on that point. Please retire, gentlemen, and make up your verdict."

Silas Xavier Floyd.

He Loved Music

IN the cemetery at Saratoga a lone widow has erected a handsome mausoleum in memory of her departed husband. In the vault she has placed a fine music-box that she makes regular

pilgrimages to wind up. The late lamented was " so fond of music."

C. A. Huling.

CELEBRATIN' THE FOURTH

By Norman H. Pitman

WHEN the cats is still a-prowlin'
Round the corner of the fence,
While the dogs is still a-howlin'
Jes' fer lack of better sense,



Pabst

brews beer to suit the popular taste; some light and some dark, but all absolutely pure. It's not an experiment, but an assured fact, and thus the widespread popularity of Pabst Blue Ribbon is explained.

Walnuts and Wine

While yer gran'pa's still a-sleepin',
 An' you hear yer daddy snore,
 Then's the time to go a-creepin'
 Like a mouse across the floor,
 Till you find yerself a-peepin'
 At the clock to see 'f it's four.
 When the baby's quit its cryin',
 An' yer mammy's gone to sleep,
 Then's the time to be a-tryin'
 How a boy the Fourth can keep.

Jump into yer pants an' jacket,
 Go out barefoot in the dark,
 Fer it's time to raise a racket,
 An' it's time to have a lark.
 Take yer cannons, crackers, rockets,
 Pistol, drum, an' other toys,
 Put some matches in yer pockets,
 Fer it's time to make a noise.
 Then if no one's near to hinder,
 Strike a light an' start the fun
 Jes' beneath yer daddy's winder,
 Keepin' ready fer to run.
 Thund'rin' blazes, what a buster!
 Guess you'd better stop a while,
 Such a giant cracker muster
 Waked the people fer a mile,

Hush! somebody's speakin': "Sonny,
 Did you hear the breakfast bell?
 Seems to me it's very funny
 That you like your bed so well."
 Hang it all! I've been a-sleepin',
 Ole folks up ahead of me,
 While I dreamed I'd been a-keepin'
 Fourth July since hap-pas' three.

An Economical Mother

SMALL Katherine, who had been forbidden to touch the ink-bottle, had accidentally spilled its contents not only all over her mother's desk, but on the rug, several chairs, and her own apron. Her mother, on discovering the state of affairs, had expressed more surprise than pleasure. When the father of the family returned at night his little daughter met him at the door and asked,—

"Papa, how much does a bottle of ink cost?"

"Oh, about five cents."

"Five cents!" exclaimed the aggrieved youngster in a tone of deep disgust.



Schlitz

We Go to Bohemia for Hops

We send our own buyers there every year to get the best that are grown, and we pay for them twice what common hops cost.

A partner in our business buys our barley, and selects the best from all.

We get our water from six wells, bored to rock.

Our yeast is all developed from the original mother cells which helped make Schlitz Beer famous.

We even filter air

All the air that touches Schlitz Beer comes to it through air filters.

And the beer itself is filtered through white wood pulp.

Then we age it for months, until it can't cause biliousness.

We sterilize every bottle.

**Yet Schlitz Beer
costs only
common beer
prices**

THE BEER
THAT MADE
MILWAUKEE
FAMOUS.

Ask for the brewery bottling.

"And to think that mamma would make all that fuss about one little bottle of ink!"

Carroll W. Rankin.

Hungry
Freddie

LITTLE FREDDIE, aged four, was visiting his grandpa, who always asked a blessing at the table. One day when the bell rang for dinner Freddie came running in from his play all out of breath, climbed up into his high chair, and exclaimed: "Hurry up, grandpa, and read your plate! I's awful hungry!"

S. L. T.

No Difference

THE Frenchman did not know all about the English language.

"I would like to come see you ver' much. In fact, I would have came, only I thought you vere ver' busy. I do not like to cockroach upon your time."

"Not 'cockroach,' that's not right. You should say 'encroach, encroach.'"

"Aha, that is it, 'hencroach, hencroach.' I see, I have got de gender of de verb wrong."

C. Stratton.

THE MODERN FARMER

By Jack Appleton

OBSERVE the modern farmer! In the shade
He works his crops by letters-patent now:
Steam drives the reaper (which is union-made),
As in the spring it pushed the auto-plough;
A patent milker manages each cow;
Electric currents guide the garden spade,
And cattle, poultry, pigs through "process" wade
To quick perfection—Science shows them how.
But while machinery plants and reaps, he rests
Upon his porch, and listens to the quail
That pipe far off in yonder hand-made vale,
With muscles flabby and with strength gone stale,
Until, in desperation, he invests
In "Muscle-Building Motions Taught by Mail"!

The Cruelty
of Jean
François

THE other morning, when I stepped out upon the lawn to enjoy my after-breakfast cigar, Jean, the French-Canadian gardener, was stamping vigorously upon a little mound of fresh-turned earth and softly chuckling to himself.

"Ah M'sieu," he cried with a triumphant air as I approached, "I am not a one to be trifled with. I am a cr-r-uel man when once I am arouse. M'sieu will remember the mole that has long tam ravaged the strawberry beds of Madame. Every morning Madame says, 'Jean, why catchest thou not that

TAKE YOUR CHOICE.

1 QUART \$1.00

4 QUARTS \$3.20

WE PAY EXPRESS CHARGES IN EITHER CASE.

We have one of the largest distilleries in the world. We are the largest bottlers of whiskey in the world. We have more whiskey in our eight Bonded Warehouses than any other distiller in the world. There is more **HAYNER WHISKEY** sold than any other brand in the world. We have been in business for over 37 years, serve regularly half-a-million satisfied customers and have a capital of \$500,000.00 paid in full, so you run no risk when you deal with us. Don't forget that **HAYNER WHISKEY** goes direct from our own distillery to you, with all its original strength, richness and flavor, thus assuring you of absolute purity and saving you the enormous profits of the dealers. Don't forget that a **HAYNER** quart is an honest quart of 32 ounces, 4 to the gallon. It takes 5 of the ordinary "quarts" to make a gallon. We give one-fourth more in every bottle, reducing our price just that much. You get both quality and quantity

HAYNER WHISKEY

Send us \$1.00 for **ONE QUART** or \$3.20 for **FOUR QUARTS** of **HAYNER SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE**, and we will pay the express charges. We ship in a plain, sealed package; no marks to even suggest contents. When the whiskey reaches your home, try it, sample it thoroughly. Then, if you don't find it all right, perfectly satisfactory in every way and better than you ever had before or can buy from anybody else at any price, ship it back to us at our expense and your money will be promptly refunded. We stand all the expense if you don't wish to keep the whiskey. **YOU** risk nothing. We ship one quart on your first or trial order only. All subsequent orders must be for at least 4 quarts at 80 cents a quart. The packing and express charges are almost as much on one quart as on four and even at \$1.00 for one quart we lose money, but we want you to try it. **WE PREFER TO HAVE YOU ORDER FOUR QUARTS FOR \$3.20 RIGHT NOW FOR THEN WE WILL MAKE A LITTLE PROFIT AND YOU WILL ALSO SAVE MONEY.** But take your choice. \$1.00 for 1 quart or \$3.20 for 4 quarts, express prepaid. Your money back if you're not satisfied.

Trial orders for Ariz., Cal., Col., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Ore., Utah., Wash., or Wyo. must be 1 Quart for \$1.25 by **EXPRESS REPAID**. Subsequent orders on the basis of 4 QUARTS for \$4.00 by **EXPRESS PREPAID** or 20 Quarts for \$16.00 by **FREIGHT PREPAID**.

Remit by Check, Bank Draft, Express or Money Order. It is unsafe to send currency unless you register your letter. Write our nearest office and do it **NOW**.

ESTABLISHED
1868.

THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY,

DISTILLERY
TROY, OHIO.

BAYTON, OHIO.

ST. LOUIS, MO.,

ST. PAUL, MINN.,

ATLANTA, GA.,



mole?' But that mole was wise—he was queek. Always I look and look, but never can I find heem. But at last—thees very morning—I catch heem. I hold heem tight in my hand—so—and I say, 'Aha-a-a, is it thou, then, that has vexed Madame and ravaged her beds of the strawberry? Aha-a-a, you shall repent of thees wickedness.' Then I wonder how I shall kill heem. Will I choke heem or will I cut him with the knife? No, that would be of too easy a death. He must be punished as well as killed. I wondered and wondered, but at last I had the grand idea. Ah, it was cr-r-uel, M'sieu, that way I keel heem. But what would you? Did he not deserve of the worst? But he will vex Madame no more. I fix heem—I bury heem alive."

J. W. Pinson.

Equals MR. JONES was a deacon in the Methodist Church, his religion being reserved for the Sabbath. One day he overheard a workman swearing, and he stopped to argue with him on the enormity of his sin. "Oh, well," said the man, "you pray a little and I swear a little, and we don't either of us mean anything."

Mary H. Northend.

How the Mine was Named UP in the Black Hills of South Dakota is a mine with a peculiar name. This is the way it came to be christened.

A prospector and his wife were one day strolling over the hills on a little excursion. In stepping from one rock to another the man chanced to dislodge a bit of stone. As he picked up the chipped rock to toss it away his eye fell on a little thread of yellow. It was gold.

When the mine had been staked out and the claim filed at the land office, the question of a name was raised. His wife asked him to call it after her.

The man smiled sweetly. "It is just as you say; the mine shall be named in your honor."

And from that day to this one of the richest gold-mines in the Middle West goes by the endearing name of "Holy Terror."

Leslie W. Quirk.

A Sound Reason AT a rural watering-place the guests were sitting on the front piazza, which overlooked the street.

A rustic, who was greatly under the influence of liquor, found his way up there and became offensively "agreeable." Being admonished to desist from his attentions many times, he persisted, and at last approached one of the ladies and commenced to annoy her with crude attempts at smartness.

A gentleman who had been watching him closely, but saying nothing, now swiftly approached him and tossed him over into the wet sand below.

He got up, pulled a much-soiled handkerchief from his pocket, wiped the sand from his eyes and mouth, and then, looking up as he swayed back and forth, addressed the man who did the deed:

"Yes, ——— you! I suppose you think you're smart, but I don't. I expect you think I don't know what you done that fer; but I'll let you know

ENTRANCING. The EDISON PHONOGRAPH



Don't judge the **Phonograph** by what you have heard—the imitations or the old styles—but call at the nearest dealer's and hear the **Phonograph** with Mr. Edison's recent improvements.

5000 DEALERS SELL PHONOGRAPHS

== **National** ==
Phonograph Co.

ORANGE, N. J.

NEW YORK, 83 Chambers Street
CHICAGO, 304 Wabash Avenue
SAN FRANCISCO, 933 Market Street
EUROPE, 32 Ruepart Saint Georges,
ANTWERP, BELGIUM

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER in the frigid zone of Alaska or in the torrid zone of the Philippines can enjoy the delicious flavor of Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk in his coffee, tea, or chocolate. Established in 1857, it has stood first for forty-five years.

DAUCHY & Co.'s NEWSPAPER CATALOGUE.—We are in receipt of the 1903 edition of this well-known work containing all the distinctive features which have made the twelve previous editions valuable. This work is a complete newspaper directory listing all the periodical publications of the United States and Canada. It is handsomely bound in red cloth and contains seven hundred and ninety-two pages and gives complete and carefully arranged statistics as to frequency of issue, date of establishment, circulation, etc., of every publication. It is convenient for desk use, and is the only newspaper directory which has a space for memoranda against the name of each paper in which advertisers can note the details of their contracts with the papers and thus have their records always at hand in systematic and accessible shape. The publishers' price is five dollars, and it can be obtained from the publishers, Messrs. Dauchy & Company, 27 Park Place, New York, or from booksellers.



For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.

An Old and Well-Tried Remedy,

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS THE GUMS, ALLAYS ALL PAIN, CURES IND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by all Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.

that I do. Blank your buttons! the reason why you throwed me over them banisters was that you don't want me up there, — you!"

Henry M. Wittae.

THE TOY PISTOL

By Silas Xavier Floyd

NED took the little pistol,
And into it he blew;
And then his soul immortal
To scenes eternal flew.

When Peter saw him enter,
"My! why so soon?" he said.
"I didn't know 'twas loaded,"
Replied poor little Ned.

**How He Won
Her**

"How did you like your son-in-law?" asked Mrs. Parker of Mrs. Oldfield, who had but recently returned from a visit to her newly married daughter.

This daughter had married an official of high rank in Washington much against the wishes of her mother, who had long cherished a secret hope that a certain neighboring farmer might prove the Darby for her rosy-cheeked Joan.

"At first I didn't like him much," she answered. "Then one day nothin' would do my Emily but that I must go with her to one of those hifalutin' receptions they give at the White House; and when I went in and saw him standin' there in all his official garbage lookin' so handsome, my heart went out to him right then and there, and says I to Emily, 'Exit homo!'"

Miriam Cocke.

Undecided

HAROLD, who is the little son of a minister, was talking with his mother regarding his future career, and after some little reflection he said,—

"Well, mamma, I'm going to be either a minister or a Christian when I grow up."

H. J. L.

Perfect Bliss

WILLIAM'S table manners were notoriously bad,—so bad that he was facetiously accused of spoiling the manners of a pet coon chained in the back yard. He gripped his fork as though afraid it was going to get away from him, and he used it like a hay-fork. Reproaches and entreaties were in vain. His big sister's pleading, "Please, William, don't eat like a pig," made no impression upon him.

One day William and his bosom friend, a small neighbor, dined alone, and William was heard to say in a tone of great satisfaction as he planted both

Cudahy's Rex Brand Beef Extract

is superior to all others

THE
TASTE
TELLS



THE
TASTE
TELLS

It Makes the
Most Savory Soups, Sauces, Gravies
and

BEEF TEA

FREE! OUR FAMOUS INDIAN HEADS
are highly prized for "dens."
We will send you one FREE if you will
send us the names of your grocer and
druggist, and four cents in stamps to cover
cost of mailing, or a metal cap from a 2-oz.
jar of Rex Brand Beef Extract.

Address Beef Extract Dept.

The Cudahy Packing Company
South Omaha, Neb.

Pictures copyright by Gayo, Omaha, Neb.

Allibone's Reference Books

By S. AUSTIN ALLIBONE, LL.D.

DICTIONARY OF AUTHORS

A Critical Dictionary of English Literature and British and American Authors, Living and Deceased, with a Supplement by John Foster Kirk, LL.D. The entire work containing the names and history of over 83,000 authors.

"Far superior to any other work of the kind in our language."—Lord Macaulay.

"Full of information; heaped up and running over."—Hon. George Bancroft.

"A rich storehouse of knowledge."—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Complete in five imperial 8vo volumes. Cloth, \$17.50; half morocco, \$37.50

ALLIBONE'S QUOTATIONS

A valuable work of reference for every home, library, and academy. The set contains the following works:

Great Authors of All Ages

Poetical Quotations

Prose Quotations

Complete in three 8vo vols. Per set, cloth, \$7.50; or sold separately

elbows on the table, "Say, Harry, they's nobody here but us. Let's eat like hogs and enjoy ourselves."

Caroline Lockhart.

**A Real
Conversation
with Clancy**

ONCE a year Clancy comes up to Meadowview to plough the garden.

"You have a new horse, Clancy," says I.

"I have," says he.

"Where's the old one?"

"Thraded her fer this one."

"What was the matter with her?"

"She'd bad kidneys and a weak back."

"Will she be better in the new place?"

"Shure, she won't be long there. That man could sell her at the Hunt Club fer a high jumper; anybody'll b'lave him."

"Professional horse trader?" I asked.

"No, the preacher."

Cy Warman.

STAYING AWAKE

By Flavia Rosser

I STAYED awake nearly all last night, and wished that it was day.
Oh, say, when you were a little boy, did you ever do that way?
Something sweet most smothered me—our locust-tree's in bloom,
It caught all the moonlight in the world and threw it into my room
And when it came a-creeping high and higher on my bed,
'Twas then I got to thinking how it would be to be dead.

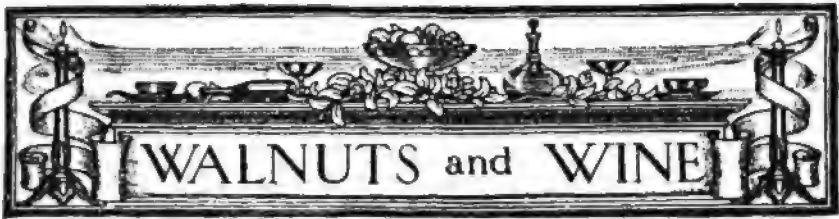
I thought how still the house would be, like when the baby died,
I thought how everybody'd come, and then I almost cried.
I shut my eyes and was stiff and straight on my back like you would play,—
When you were a little bit of a boy, didn't you do that way?—
I folded my hands up peaceful-like, as picture people do,
But left a place 'tween my fingers to stick the flowers through.

At last when I was ready, I held my breath in tight,
And I guess I laid just that way pretty nearly half the night.
Maybe I slept a little bit, for I saw the sun on my bed.
But I feel like I'm a dreaming or really truly dead
When I smell those sweet white locust flowers and I don't much want to play—
I suspect when you were a little boy, sometimes you felt this way.

Uplifted

THE poor woodsman, who had been scalped and left for dead.
opened his eyes carefully and glanced around. Then, so quietly
as to show no motion, he rolled over upon his side. As he caught
sight of his enemy far away in a sunny opening, waving a blond scalp, he re-
marked grimly, "Well, that's off my mind."

S. C. Stuntz.



OUR CHRISTMAS GREETING

(From the Calamity Creek Courier)

TWELVE months has came and went sense we heralded this festive season through the *Courier*. During that time this oasis of the West has growed and expanded like a musharoom. With the finest jail in the county, and three dance-houses a-building, it can ~~be said~~ that we have took a front seat in the van of prawgress, and them ~~train~~ ~~rbbers~~ down to Crooked Elbow needn't think they can ever hold us ~~up~~. ~~But~~ to-day we would not mention them green-eyed polecats down to the ~~Elbow~~ save in a sperit of forgiveness, for forgiveness is suitable to this festive season, and it shall serve as a text for this message.

Let us start in to-night, Christmas Eve, and see how much we can do in that line. Let us forget old scores, hush the bitter word, the hasty speech, an' lay aside our animosities—and guns—while the joy-bells ring!

All on us has enemies, and we ain't no exception. During our fearless course on this paper we have gathered enough to man a regiment. But we forgive 'em. We forgive 'em all.

Even the onsanctified ground-hog that runs *The Cowpuncher* down the street. We forgive him too. Yea, we would clasp him to our bosom, and call him brother, if the Board of Health would put him in pickle for a spell and prepare him for such an affectionate function. We would grasp his hand in ourn even if it was indelibly stained by crimes unfit for publication. For the spirit of forgiveness is with us in this joyous hour. The dove of peace sets on our rooftree, and long may she roost there!

Ring out, wild bells!

It has been suggested that we shoot him first and forgive him a'terwards, and likewise parties has proposed him as a' ornament to a tree, not necessary of the Christmas kind. But no, we preach to-day peace and forgiveness. Let our hearts expand with the holy joy of this noble emotion!

And if Lysander Buggins has any desire to asperge the sincerity of our forgiveness of him, we'll ram this editorial down his throat with some lead to weight it down!

With what satisfaction we can face the coming twelve month with all our enemies forgiven! Could any shootin'-match equal 'it? To feel the ile of peace trickle through ye down to yer very boots! Oh, 'tis a glorious feeling, friends, such as we could never find on tap at the Red Light bar.

Even the red-nosed reprobate down the street must feel some stir of that holy emotion in the muddy depths of his measly soul. Let the joy-bells ring

throughout the land. and for the coming year we wish our readers may never have the other feller get the fust drop on 'em. Hail, happy day!

LEMUEL JESWICK,

Editor, *Courier*

P. S.—Just as we go to press we learn that that loathsome leper, Lyman Buggins, has let his goat loose in the Sunday-school, and that it's eat up the chilluns' presents, includin' the candles. Gents, can you look a telegraph pole in the face a'ter that, and is there no neckties to spare in this prosperous community?

L. J.,

Per E. D. Pierce.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD HELEN has a passion for celebrating anniversaries and holidays. Her birthday in January always means a party.

I said to her, "Next month is November, and that's when Thanksgiving comes." She nodded eagerly. I continued, "The month after that is December, and what comes then?" "Christmas," she replied promptly. I went on, "The month after that is January, and what comes then?" She cried in triumph, "*Fourth of July!*"

A. W. M.

A CHRISTMAS SERMON

By *Silas Xavier Floyd*

I's gwi' talk to you dis mawnin'
'Bout de little Baby bo'n
In de stable whar' de hosses
Gnawed de nubbins uv de co'n.
Don't you laff, you guilty sinnah,
'Cause de Book mos' plainly say
Dat hit happened in de stable,
An' hit happened Chris'mas Day!

An' de sweetes' choir in glory
Jes' stepped out upon de cloud,
An' dey sung deir heabenly music,
An' dey sung hit low an' loud;
An' de shepherds on de hillsides,
All a-tendin' uv de sheep,
W'en dey hyeahed de angels singin'
Woke up sudden f'um deir sleep.

Den dey seen a star a-p'intin'
To de town uv Bethlehem,
An' dey hyeahed a voice a-sayin',
"Go an' see de New-bo'n Lamb!"



The Charm of Childhood
The pure, soft baby-skin is carried
from the nursery to old age by the use of

**PEARS'
SOAP**

An' dey lef' deir flocks a-feedin'
 Out dar in de solemn night,
 An' dey hopped up on deir camels,
 An' dey soon wuz out uv sight.

An' de star hit went befo' 'em,—
 Now, my brothahs, hit's jes' so,—
 An' de star hit went befo' 'em,
 So's to show 'em whar' to go.
 W'en at las' dey reached de village,
 Den de star hit stood stock still,
 An' de shepherds knowed fur certain
 Dey had 'beyed de Marstah's will.

I can't tell you all de story
 In dis short an' scat'rin' talk,
 But de shepherds seen de Baby
 'Fo' de little Chile could walk;
 An' dey fell down on deir faces
 Right upon de stable flo',
 An' dey showed us by deir actions
 How to love Him an' ado'e.

Ain't hit strange, my feller-Christuns,
 How de Babe dat's now so high
 W'en at fuss He come f'um glory
 In a manger low should lie?
 Ain't hit stranger still, my brothahs,
 How He went 'long tell He died
 'Dout a place to lay His head on,
 An' few friends upon His side?

Let us be His friends f'um hencefo'th,
 Who wuz bo'n so fer away,
 In de stable wid de beas'es
 On dat blessed Chris'mas Day.
 Dough we's bo'n in lowly places,
 Let us each one strive to rise
 On de wings uv trut an' goodniss
 To de mansions in de skies!



**A Good Pious
Talk**

"BROTHER," said a member of the flock to the shepherd, "I wish you would drop in at my house some day on your rounds. I feel like it would do me good to have a *good pious talk* with you."

The pastor kindly assented to the request, and a few days later was seated in the little parlor conversing with the good lady while awaiting the return of the good man from the fields.

Suddenly there arose a great commotion at the barn. Horses ran madly



THE EQUITABLE

HENRY B. HYDE
FOUNDER

J. W. ALEXANDER
PRESIDENT



J. H. HYDE
VICE PRESIDENT

Past, Present and Future Christmases

were all shown to Ebenezer Scrooge in Dickens' "Christmas Carol."

Suppose you could be shown your future Christmases, or those of your family?

Don't you think it might possibly cause you to at once take steps to protect your loved ones and to provide for your own old age?

An adequate Endowment Policy in the Equitable will accomplish both of these results.

Vacancies for men of character to act as representatives
Apply to GAGE E. TARBELL, 2nd Vice President

For full information fill out this coupon, or write

THE EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY of the United States
120 Broadway, New York Dept. No. 1

Please send me information regarding an Endowment for
\$..... if issued at..... years of age

Name.....

Address.....

about the lot, the geese cackled their loudest, chickens flew into trees, and the solemn conversation at the house was interrupted by a powerful shouting: "Here, you confounded black niggers, why don't you come here and help put up these cussed hosses. Hurry up, I tell you, or I'll punch your miserable hides with this pitchfork, you blamed black rascals. Whoa, Jack, you——"

"Pa, Pa!" shouted his daughter, running towards him. "Pa, the pre——"

"Shut up your gab, Mandy, and get back in the house, or——"

"But, Pa, the preacher is in the house."

After a short and very quiet interval a heavy step sounded on the porch, the front door was pushed open, and the brother came in, singing joyously:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found—
Was blind, but now I see?"

He happened to glance into the room where his guest was seated; then, with outstretched hands, he greeted him heartily, exclaiming in utter astonishment, "Why, brother, I had no idea you was anywheres about here or I wouldn't 'a' been a-singin' so."

Bruce Craven.

The Unquiet Sex

THAT Bessie is an indefatigable exponent of the strenuous life is a fact fully realized by her exhausted family. They follow in the wake of her small investigating person with remonstrances and soothing ointments from the rising to the setting of the sun. She has an elder brother who has learned to look upon her activity more in sorrow than in anger.

One Sunday noon he stood gravely before the fire, his youthful mind big with recollections of the morning's lesson and his teacher's insistence upon the sin of Sabbath-breaking, when suddenly his eye fell upon the incorrigible Bessie. There she sat on the floor in one corner of the room, her chubby face all frivolity and smiles, dolls to the left of her, dolls to the right of her, and a kitten ecstatically plunging after a piece of string the other end of which her pink hands held. One glance was enough for the elder brother, and he strode at once towards the prodigal.

"Bessie," he demanded sternly, "do you want to go to Hell?"

Without a moment's hesitation the string was dropped, up scrambled the fat little legs, and off trotted Bessie towards the door, calling over her shoulder,—

"Jus' wait till I get my hat, Ha'vy."

Evelyn B. Currier.

Hints on Giving

WE should not give people things they don't want.

WE should avoid giving anybody the mumps or the chicken-pox if we can help it.

Do not give a friend the cold shoulder without baked beans and hot coffee to go with it.

A man should not give a lady a kiss unless he thinks she would enjoy it, except in the case of his wife and his mother-in-law.

Did You Ever Know

That Improper Food Often Causes the Liquor Habit?

It's a great proposition to get rid of a taste for liquor by changing food.

Improper food and stimulants like coffee and tea create unnatural appetites. The one who eats only proper food is normal in health and therefore normal in appetite.

By way of example take the case of a well-known business man of Lowry City, Mo., who says: "About three years ago my appetite failed me and my food disagreed with me. I got weak, nervous and dull and entirely unfit for business. Then like a fool I went to taking liquor to stimulate an appetite.

"For a time this worked well and I thought I had found a simple remedy, but I noticed I had to take more all the time and before long I found that I could not get along without the whiskey and I was in a pitiable condition.

"I tried to quit but it seemed impossible, as I needed nourishment and my stomach rejected food, and the more whiskey I drank the worse I got. I kept fighting this battle for more than two years and almost gave up all hope. Then I noticed an article about the food GRAPE-NUTS and concluded to give it a trial.

"I found I could eat GRAPE-NUTS with a relish and it was the first food that I found nourishing me in a long time. Soon my stomach trouble stopped, my appetite increased and then the craving thirst relaxed until all desire for drink was gone.

"I have used GRAPE-NUTS now for more than a year and I am now entirely strong and robust, entirely cured from drink and able to work hard every day. My gratitude for GRAPE-NUTS is unspeakable, as it has saved my life and reputation."
Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

A
Free
Sample
of
Delicious
GRAPE-NUTS
Food sent
to
any address
upon request.



Do not give red suspenders to a total stranger; he might prefer those of a pale-blue shade instead.

Do not present a bucking broncho to a tall, pale man of sedentary habits, as he would not likely live long to enjoy it.

When you give castor-oil to a howling infant give it for its intrinsic worth, and not merely as an evidence of your regard.

John A. Simpson.

AYE, THERE'S THE RUB

By Sam S. Stinson

WE all of us try to forgive and forget
When similar treatment we crave,
And think we are virtuous paragons, yet
We cannot forget we forgave.

Tea-Blossom's Love-Story MORE than ever like a picture on a fan she looked, I thought, upon this last day.

I noticed a new light in her pretty, slanting eyes. Her tiny feet seemed to glide rhythmically to unheard music—unheard to us, to her perhaps soul-born.

Even the tea she poured and served so daintily exhaled an unusually delicious fragrance through her little tea-room.

As she poised a lump of sugar questioningly over my cup our eyes met. She smiled radiantly.

"You look happy, little Tea-Blossom," I said. By this name was she known to her admiring patrons.

"I am of so habby," she said shyly. "I lig to dance whad you call those—oh, cake dance!"

"You are going to be married," I said sternly.

Coquettishly she shook her head.

"Marry! me? Who would marry with me. Oh, no! no! no! It is, Highness, thad I go'n' back to Japan. I haf mak' money nuf, and—now, with the cherry-blossoms, I shall be—in Japan," she murmured rapturously.

"Some one in Japan is waiting for little Tea-Blossom?" I asked teasingly.

"Oh, yaes! My honorable father an' honorable mother," she answered, blushing furiously.

"And who else?" I urged.

Diving down into the folds of her scarlet obi, she found her little fan, which she flirted coolingly.

"Tell me, little one," I persisted (for we all petted her outrageously, this doll of the Orient, we delighted so in her quaintly worded chatter).

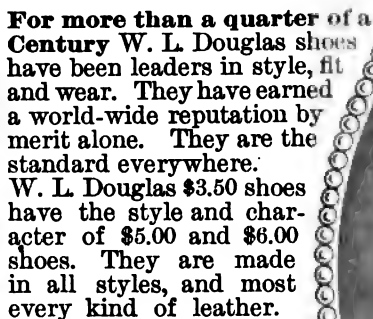
"I—don'—lig—for—tell," she said softly.

I had no pity. "You must tell me," I said gently, but firmly.

"I—mus'?" she repeated innocently; then, with a rapt gaze into space, she spoke as though looking at some form beyond my vision.

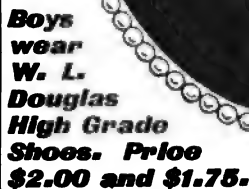
"Those—man thad wait for—me is the mos' nize gent in Japan, he's bes',

ESTABLISHED
JULY 8, 1876



Douglas uses Co-Colt proves there
lue in Douglas
shoes. Corona
is the highest grade patent leather made.
our \$3.50 shoes equal custom made shoes for
"I have formerly paid \$8.00; and they wear
"—JOHN H. SCUDDER, Trenton, N. J.

not convenient to one of the W. L. Douglas stores (see list below), send order direct to factory. Give desired, size and width usually worn, plain or fancy, light, medium or heavy sole. Enclose 25c. in addition to price of shoe for carriage. Send money by express order or cashier's check. Illustrated catalog of Fall & Winter Styles mailed free. Address W. L. Douglas, 153 Spark St., Brooklyn, Mass.



Every
Gentleman
Should Have
Three Pairs of
Shoes to Dress His

Feet Properly on All Occasions. He should have a pair of Viscolized, waterproof, heavy, double-sole shoes for wet weather; a pair suitable for pleasant days, and for full dress a pair of Patent Leather Button Shoes. Don't pay \$15 to \$18 for these three pairs; you can get as much style, fit, service and comfort in 3 pairs of Douglas shoes for \$10.50.

4018 St., 2398 N. Front St.,
 4016 Lancaster Avenue.
 Pittsburg, Pa., 427-429 Smithfield
 St., 441 Wood Street.
 Portland, Me., 646 Congress St.
 Prov., R.I., 226 Westminster St.
 Richmond, Va., 1000 N. 10th St.
 Rochester, N.Y., 236 E. Main St.
 St. Louis, Mo., 306 Olive Street.
 Springfield, Mass., 312 Main St.
 St. Paul, Minn., 428 Wabasha St.
 Syracuse, N.Y., 382 S. Salina St.
 Trenton, N.J., 100 N. 10th Street.
 Trenton, N.J., 101 E. State St.
 Troy, N.Y., 320-323 River Street.
 Utica, N.Y., 421 Genesee Street.
 Washington, D.C., 906 Pennsylvania
 Ave., N.W.
 Worcester, Mass., 38 Bank St.
 Wilmington, Del., 701 Market St.
 Worcester, Mass., 367 Main St.

THE
BEST
BOYS'
SHOES
IN
THE WORLD
FOR
THE PRICE
\$2.00
AND
\$1.75.

yaes, he's bes'—as what—you call—those Great Augustness? those Pres-i-dant? Yaes, I—lig him," she said shyly, then with delicious naïveté explained, "thad Japanese."

"Oh," I commented dryly, "you like him! Does he like you?"

"He—ast—for to marry—with me; thad's cause I came away to 'Merica. My—my uncle? Yaes, thad's right, my uncle he don't lig thad honorable man."

"Why?"

"I don'—know! Yaes, thad's lie, I *know*, I tell! Tea's why."

"Tea?" I echoed.

"Yaes, Highness, my—my—uncle—he sen's tea to 'Merica. also thad ver' nize gent he sen's tea to 'Merica; those—whad you call? ah, yaes, they mak' mad bof' with each odder 'bout thad tea," she concluded fluently.

"I see. But tell me, little one, what is your sweetheart's name?"

Like a Jacque rose she flamed redly; passing sweet she looked, her modesty suddenly wounded by my directness.

"Thad—man," she said courteously, "he's honorable name—is—too—ver'—hard—for 'Merican lady to—spic."

"Thank you," I responded. (Out of the mouths of dolls cometh reproof at times.)

She filled my cup again in silence with great gravity, but again my curiosity arose rampant.

"And when you go back, little one, you will marry this Japanese?"

"Yaes, if—my—uncle—wish," she replied with Oriental composure.

"Surely, if you love each other, you will marry?"

"In Japan maidens mus' obey dere—whad those you say—dere boss—no, no, dere pa-rends."

"But your uncle is not your father?"

"No, Augustness, my father is ver' miserably poor; my uncle is my father's father's son; he give—my honorable pa-rends much food, much money," she replied deferentially.

"And this tea quarrel?"

"Thad's him! thad's him!" exclaimed the little fan lady eagerly. "Quar-rel? thad's mos' gran' word—not '*mad*'—quarrel—I lig—thad—quarrel."

"Tell me about it," I prompted.

"I tell, yaes. My uncle he sell bad tea an'—mak'—no much money; thad man,—my frien',—yaes, he sell mos' bes' tea and mak' all—money—much money. My uncle—he lies, he—ah, whad you say? yes, *cheats*. Thad nize man he don' lie—he always—'fraid for lie—he nevair don' put bad stuff—I don' know 'Merican word—mak' tea luke pitty? Yaes, '*dye*.' My uncle he always dye his teas. Thad Japanese—sen' clean tea to 'Merica—so!"

"And you are really going home next week? But not alone, surely!"

"Oh, no! oh, no! Highness, Yokime he tak' me—back—he tea merchant."

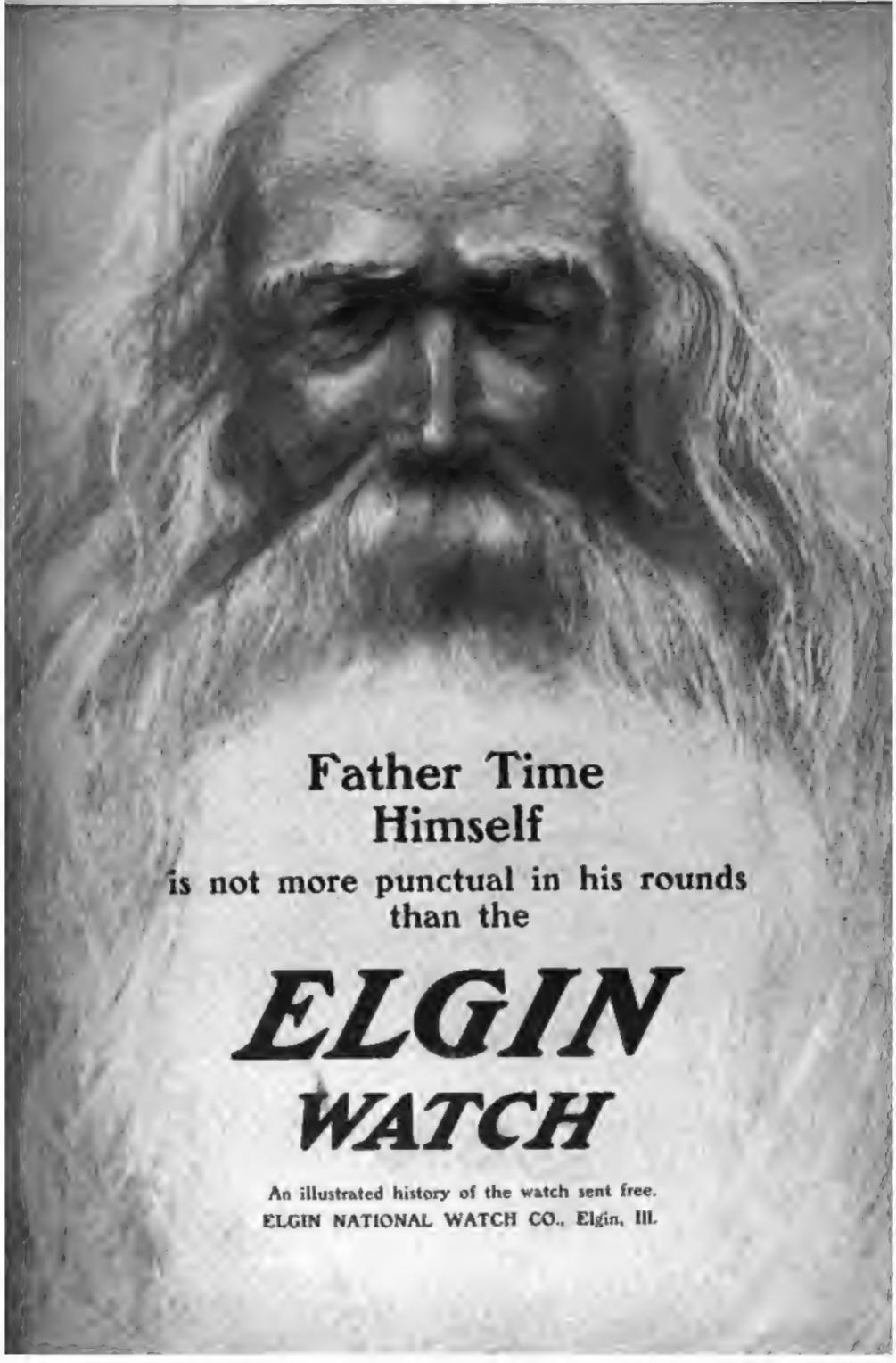
"How we shall all miss you, sweet child!" I said tenderly.

We social idlers loved her as one loves a pet canary. Her bright eyes gladdened with appreciation.

"I—habby my honorable ladies so lig—me," she answered simply.

Then, excusing herself a moment, she vanished behind a gorgeous screen.

In another moment she was back.



Father Time
Himself

is not more punctual in his rounds
than the

ELGIN
WATCH

An illustrated history of the watch sent free.
ELGIN NATIONAL WATCH CO., Elgin, Ill.

In the folds of her kimono she had something.

"I mak' a—bes'—present—you ver' nize with Japanese—maiden; here is a lil—box of those tea."

"Not your 'tea of gold!'" I exclaimed, astounded by her generosity, for the tea was of fabulous value.

"Yaes, Highness, thad Japarese—he told me—in a letder—to give at the ver' last—all thad gold tea to my august ladies thad they think—for me—sometimes, *when I—be in—Japan*," she murmured dreamily. "He no sell—he give—that bes' gran' tea to—me—I sell—mak' heaps money—to—bring home—to—my—honorable father. Thad Japanese nevair, oh! whad you say—charge? Yaes! nevair charge me aeny money. My honorable father lig—hear thad—an'——"

"He will?"

"He will—say—to my uncle—he mus' also lig—those—man."

"You mean your father, having all that money, will be able to persuade your rich uncle to give his consent to your marriage to——"

"Those—man," answers Tea-Blossom with continued but polite reserve.

She is gone! Not a vestige of her dainty little tea-room remains.

No one knows even her real name. She would never disclose it.

Minna Thomas Antrim.

A CHRISTMAS MISTAKE

By Aloysius Coll

LIKE some intruding meddler

He came with stock and store—

I thought he was a peddler,

And turned him from my door.

But when he left, with jingle

Of bells, I knew my sin—

That stranger was Kriss Kringle—

I wish I'd let him in!

A Postscript

A LITTLE St. Paul girl had a very large family connection to pray for, and one night when she rose from her knees her mother said,—

"Why, Edith, you forgot grandma!"

She got right down on her knees again and said,—

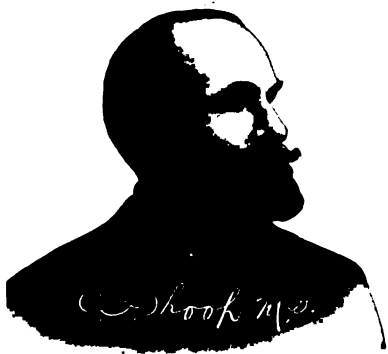
"Oh God, wouldn't that give you cold feet? I forgot grandma!"

C. M. B.

Almost the Same

THE waking hours of G. Otto Krupp were spent in thinking of schemes whereby he might get rich quick. As the owner of an eight-mile railroad he was a person of considerable local importance in the Pennsylvania-German settlement where he resided.

One morning when Mr. Krupp's brain was particularly active it occurred to



My Book Is Free

My treatment too—if that fails.

But if it helps—if it succeeds,
If health is yours again,
I ask you to pay—\$5.50.

The book tells all.
I send it to you free
If you but write.

And further, I will send the name of a druggist near
you who will let you take six bottles of my remedy,

Dr. Shoop's Restorative

On a month's trial. If it succeeds, the cost to you is
\$5.50. If it fails, the druggist will bill the cost to me.

Don't Wait Until You Are Worse.

Taken in time, the suffering of this little one
could have been prevented:

"Two years ago my little girl was sick continuously for six months. We tried many doctors but they failed, yet it took only two bottles of your remedy to cure her, and she has remained cured."

"You can tell others of this cure if you so desire."

"Mrs. C. H. Avery, Rockdale, N. Y."

The wife of Omer Andrus, of Bayou Chicat, La., had been sick for 20 years. For 8 years could do practically no work. He writes:

"When she first started taking the Restorative she barely weighed 90 pounds; now she weighs 135, and is easily able to do all her housework."

J. G. Billingsley, of Thomasville, Ga.
He writes:

"I spent \$250.00 for other medicines, and the \$3.00 I have spent with you have done me more good than all the rest."

Both money and suffering might have been saved.

And these are only three from over 65,000 similar cases. Such letters—many of them—come every day to me.

How much serious illness the Restorative has prevented I have no means of knowing, for the slightly ill and the indisposed simply get a bottle or two of their druggist, are cured, and I never hear from them.

But of 600,000 sick ones—seriously sick, mind you—who asked for my guarantee, 39 out of 40 have paid.

If I can succeed in cases like these—fail but not time in 40 in diseases deep-seated and chronic, isn't it certain I can cure the slightly ill?

All You Need Do.

Simply write me—that is all. Tell me the book you need. The offer I make may sound extravagant. But it isn't. It would mean bankruptcy to me, though, were it not for my discovery. That discovery—the treatment of the inside nerves—taught me a way to cure. I do not doctor the mere organs. I doctor the nerves that operate them—that give them strength and power.

And failures are seldom—so seldom that I make this offer gladly, freely—so that those who might doubt may learn without risk.

Tell of it, please, to some sick friend. Or send me his name. That's but a trifle—a minute's time—a postal. He is your friend. You can help him. My way may be his only way to get well.

If I, a stranger, will do this for him, you should at least write.

Drop me a postal to-day.

Simply state which
book you want and address
Dr. Shoop.
Box 3259, Racine, Wis.

Book 1 on Dyspepsia
Book 2 on the Heart
Book 3 on the Kidneys
Book 4 for Women
Book 5 for Men (sealed)
Book 6 on Rheumatism.

Mild cases, not chronic, are often cured with one or two bottles. At druggist's.

him that by sending passes over his road to the presidents of the big railroads of the country he might receive complimentary passes in return. This would enable him to see something of the world at comparatively small expense, and such passes as he could not use personally he could dispose of advantageously. Mr. Krupp lost no time in getting letter-heads printed with his own name in large type as president. Then he sent "R. and A." passes broadcast and awaited results.

One hot afternoon a flushed representative of a big Western road walked into Mr. Krupp's office and said he had been all over town looking for the "R. and A." Railroad and could not find it. He said he was sent from Philadelphia to investigate before the company issued a pass over its entire line.

"It is chust outside of town—five minutes' walk," explained Mr. Krupp suavely.

"How long is your road?" asked the railroad's representative.

"About eight miles, I t'ink."

"Thunder! You don't expect us to exchange passes with a road like that, do you?" the representative demanded angrily. "Why, we have eight thousand miles of road."

"Vell," answered Mr. Krupp, drawing himself up with an air of offended dignity, "maybe my road ain't so long as yours, but it's chust as wide."

Caroline Lockhart.

Depriving the Pig

A CERTAIN railroad officer driving one day in a farming country suddenly recollected his boyish fondness for buttermilk. Evidently, however, it was not churning-day in that locality, for he inquired at several houses without finding a housekeeper able to supply the desired beverage. With each repeated failure his thirst increased; nothing but buttermilk, he was convinced, would serve to allay that thirst, and buttermilk he intended to have if he were obliged to visit every farmhouse in that portion of the country.

At last his zeal was rewarded. He found his buttermilk—but lost his appetite at the same time.

"Yes," said the farmer's wife, pouring out a generous cupful of a pale-green, lukewarm, uninviting liquid, "I guess I can spare you a little, but I was saving it for the pig."

Carroll Watson Rankin.

THE "ONE-GALLUS" BOY

By Lawrence Porcher Hext

'Tis now that I yearn for the haunts of my childhood

(When mercury's ninety or more in the shade),

'Tis now that I long to be lost in the wildwood,

Or idly recline in some cool, mossy glade.

DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

THE LOFTIS SYSTEM

permits any person of honest intentions, no matter how far away they may live, to open a confidential Charge Account for a Diamond, Watch or other valuable article of jewelry, and pay the same in a series of easy monthly payments.

How it is Done: Write today for our illustrated Catalogue, and from it select any article that you would like to wear or own; or, perhaps give to a loved one at Christmas. Your selection will at once be sent to your home, place of business or express office as you prefer. Examine it with all the care you wish; then, if it is all that you anticipated, and the best value that you ever saw for the money, pay one-fifth of the price and keep it. The balance you may send us in eight equal monthly payments.

On the Other Hand, if you decide not to buy, simply return the article at our expense. Whether you buy or not, we pay all express and other charges—there is no expense to you, neither do you assume any risk or obligation whatever. We submit our goods on their merits, with absolute confidence that their quality, low price and our easy terms will make you a pleased customer.

Your Christmas Plans will not be complete until you have looked through our new Christmas Catalogue, and considered what you can do in gift making in conjunction with the LOFTIS SYSTEM. The five dollars which you might pay for something cheap and trilling, will make the first payment on, and put you in immediate possession of a beautiful Diamond or a Fine Watch. With a very little money, you can make gifts that are commensurate with, and appropriate to the circumstances—for we require but one-fifth of the price of any article when we deliver it to you. **IF YOU PREFER TO BUY FOR CASH** we have a proposition to make which is thoroughly characteristic of our house. It is nothing less than our written agreement to return all that you pay for a Diamond—less ten per cent, at any time within one year. You might thus wear a fifty-dollar Diamond for a whole year, then send it back to us and get \$48, making the cost of wearing a Diamond, less than ten cents per week.

We are the largest house in the Diamond business. We are also one of the oldest—Est. 1858. We refer to any bank in America—ask your local bank how we stand in the business world. They will refer to their books of commercial ratings and tell you that we stand very high, and that our representations may be accepted without a question.

Our Guarantee Certificate given with every Diamond is the broadest and the strongest ever given by a house of unquestioned responsibility. Our exchange system is the most liberal ever devised, for it permits you to return any Diamond bought of us, and to get the full amount paid, in exchange for other goods or a larger Diamond.

An Account With Us is a confidential matter. We require no security; charge no interest; impose no penalties and create no publicity. Our customers use their charge accounts with us year after year, finding them a great convenience at such times as Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. We have no disagreeable preliminaries or vexatious delays. Everything is pleasant, prompt and guaranteed to be satisfactory.

Write to-day for catalogue.

LOFTIS BROS. & CO.

Diamonds—Watches—Jewelry

Dept. P-55 92 to 98 State Street

CHICAGO, ILL.

CHRISTMAS DIAMONDS

'Tis now that I'd forfeit my hopes of hereafter
 If I could recall just one atom of joy,
 Or echo again one sweet ripple of laughter
 That dwells in the heart of the "one-gallus" boy,
 The dirty-faced urchin, the tan-colored urchin,
 The cool, coatless urchin, the "one-gallus" boy.

I thirst for sweet buttermilk fresh from the dairy,
 And hunger for ripe, luscious fruits from the trees;
 And if I commanded the wand of a fairy,
 I'd have my cheeks fanned by a fresh country breeze.
 I wish once again I could bathe in the river,—
 Those blessed ablutions I used to enjoy,—
 But they, like my freedom, are vanished forever,
 That freedom that comes to the "one-gallus" boy.
 That rollicking freedom, that mirth-loving freedom,
 That simon-pure freedom, devoid of alloy.

But now that I live in the heat of the present.
 And think, with a sigh, of the days that are gone,
 I hope that the future holds moments as pleasant,
 As happy and blissful, as those that are flown.
 Perhaps on the shore of that golden Hereafter
 They'll clothe me again in my infantile joy.
 And maybe I'll find there the rollicking laughter
 That used to belong to the "one-gallus" boy.
 And then I'll rejoice; with my harp on my shoulder
 I'll sing the glad songs of the "one-gallus" boy.

**A Danger
Signal**

At a wedding in a church, noticing the dim religious red light that burns over the chancel, Teddy asked his bachelor uncle, "Is that a danger signal, Uncle Tom?" and Uncle Tom, who is suspected of hovering on the brink of a proposal, was heard to reply, "Yes."

A. de B.

**The Race
Question**

SCENE—Race track. *Enter old colored man, seating himself.*

"Oomph, oomph. De work of de devil sho' do p'ospah. How 'do, suh? Des tol'able, thankee, suh. How you come on? Oh. I was des a-sayin' how de wo'k of de ol' boy do p'ospah. Doesn't I frequent the race-track? No, suh; no, suh. I's Baptis' myse'f, an' I low hit's all devils' doin's. Wouldn't 'a' be'n hyeah to-day, but I got a boy named Jim dat's long gone in sin an' he gwine ride one dem hosses. Oomph, dat boy! I sut'ny has talked to him and labohed wid him night an' day, but it was allers in vain, an' I's feahed dat de day of his reckonin' is at han'.

"Ain't I nevah been intrusted in racin'? Humph, you don' s'pose I been



1904 Fairy Calendar FOR CHRISTMAS

Nothing more appropriate as a remembrance—everyone wants a calendar and the Fairy Calendar is the most artistic of the year. Send one to each of your friends.

Consists of seven sheets, 10 x 12 1/4, free from all advertising, the first sheet bearing the year's calendar, and the other six, heads of beautiful women, with a burnt leather border effect and decorations in 1, Art Nouveau. Exquisitely lithographed in twelve colors, ready for hanging.

HOW TO GET IT

Send us ten oval box fronts from Fairy Soap, and we will send calendar absolutely free. If you prefer, send us 25 cents in stamps. This is, without doubt, the most liberal calendar offer of the season.

Fairy Soap is the purest and best white soap made for the toilet and bath. It is oval in shape and daintily wrapped in an individual carton. Price 5c.

THE N. K. FAIRBANK COMPANY, Department 123, Chicago.

dead all my life, does you? What you laffin' at? Oh, excuse me, excuse me, you unnerstan' what I means. You don' give a ol' man time to splain himself. What I means is dat dey has been days when I walked in de counsels of de ongwadly and set in de seats of sinnahs; and long erbout dem times I tek most ovahly strong to racin'.

"How long dat been? Oh, dat's way long back, 'fo' I got religion, mo'n thirty yeahs ago, dough I got to own I has fell from grace several times since.

"Yes, suh, I ust to ride. Ki-yi! I nevah furgit de day dat my ol' Jack put me on 'Jim Boy,' his black geldin', an' say to me, 'Si,' says you don' ride de tail offen Cunnel Scott's mare, "No Quit," I's gwine to you twell you cain't set in de saddle no mo'." Hyah, hyah. My ol' Mastah mighty han' fu' a joke. I knowed he wan't gwine to do nuffin' to me.

"Did I win? Why, whut you spec' I's doin' hyeah ef I hadn' won? W'y, ef I'd 'a' let dat Scott maib beat my 'June Boy' I'd 'a' drowned my Bull Skin Crick.

"Yes, suh, I winned; w'y, at de finish I come down dat track I was de Jedgment Day an' I was de las' one up! Ef I didn't race dat tail clean off, I 'low I made hit do a lot o' switchin'. An' aftah dat my Mandy she ma'ed me. Hyah, hyah, I ain't bin much on hol'in' de reins since.

"Sh! dey comin' in to wa'm up. Dat Jim, dat Jim, dat my boy; nasty putrid little rascal. Des a hundred an' eight, suh, des a hundred and eight. Yas, suh, dat's my Jim; I don' know whaih he gits his dev'ment at.

"What's de mattah wid dat boy? Whyn't he hunch hisse'f up on dat saddle right? Jim, Jim, whyn't you limber up, boy; hunch yo'se'f up on dat hoss lak you belonged to him and knowed you was dah. What I done showed you? De black raskil, goin' out dah tryin' to disgrace his own daddy. Hyeah he come back. Dat's bettah, you scoun'ril.

"Dat's a right smaht-lookin' hoss he's a-ridin', but I ain't a-trustin' dat bay wid de white feet—dat is, not altogethah. She's a favorwright too; but dey's sumpin' else in dis worl' sides playin' favorwrights. Jim bettah had win dis race. His hoss ain't a five to one shot, but I spec's to go way fum hyeah wid money enuff to mek a donation on de pa'sonage.

"Does I bet? Well, I don' des call hit bettin'; but den I reaks a little w'en I t'inks I kin he'p de cause. 'Tain't gamblin', o' co'se; I wouldn't gamble fu nothin', dough my ol' Mastah did ust to say dat a honest gamblah was ez good ez a hones' preachah an' mos' nigh ez skace.

"Look out dah, man, dey's off, dat nasty bay maib wid de white feet leadin' right fu'm de pos'. I knowed it! I knowed it! I had my eye on huh all de time. Oh Jim, Jim, why didn't you git in bettah, way back dah foug? Dah go de gong! I knowed dat wasn't no staht. Troop back dah, you raskils, hyah, hyah.

"I wush dat boy wouldn't do so much jummying erroun' wid dat hoss. Fust t'ing he know he ain't gwine to know whaih he's at.

"Dah, dah dey go ag'in. Hit's a sho' t'ing dis time. Bettah, Jim, bettah. Dey didn't leave you dis time. Hug dat bay mare, hug her close, boy. Don't press dat hoss yit. He holdin' back a lot o' t'ings.

"He's gainin'! doggone my cats, he's gainin'! an' dat hoss o' his'n gwine des ez stiddy ez a rockin'-chair. Jim allus was a good boy,

BETTER THAN TOYS. The EDISON PHONOGRAPH

TRADE
Thomas A Edison
MARK



The **Phonograph** is the best present, because of its inexhaustible variety and its educational value. Thousands of selections are catalogued and at least 25 are added each month; some classic, some popular and timely, some grave, some gay.

The wonderful superiority in musical performance and technical excellence of Edison Gold Moulded Records has forced other makers to officially admit that they cannot compete.

Edison Gold Moulded Records are immeasurably better than the imitations or the old styles.

Go to the nearest dealer's and hear Mr. Edison's latest improvements. Dealers everywhere sell **Phonographs**.

The **Phonograph Art Calendar**, 6 beautiful cards, lithographed in 12 colors, size 10½ by 14½ inches, no advertising in sight, sent on receipt of 25 cents at New York office.

NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Orange, N. J.

NEW YORK
83 Chambers Street

CHICAGO
304 Wabash Avenue

SAN FRANCISCO
933 Market Street

"Confound these spec's, I cain't see 'em skacely; huh, you say dey's neck an' neck; now I see 'em! now I see 'em! and Jimmy's a-ridin' like— Huh, huh, I laik to said sumpin'.

"De bay maih's done huh bes', she's done huh bes'! Dey's turned into the stretch an' still see-sawin'. Let him out, Jimmy, let him out! Dat boy done th'owed de reins away. Come on, Jimmy, come on! He's leadin' by a nose. Come on, I tell you, you black rapscaillon, come on! Give 'em hell, Jimmy! give 'em hell! Under de wire an' a len'th ahead. Doggone my cats! wake me up w'en dat othah hoss comes in.

"No, suh, I ain't gwine stay no longah, I don't app'ove o' racin', I's gwine 'roun' an' see dis hyeah bookmakah an' den I's gwine dreckly home, suh, dreckly home. I's Baptis' myse'f, an' I don't app'ove o' no sich doin's!"

Paul Laurence Dunbar.

**Business is
Business**

MR. PECKSNIFF's wife was wrathful. She flew into the bedroom and without any introductory remarks said,—

"William, I'd like to know where our house-girl gets all the fine clothes she's been wearing here of late?" Her tone was commanding. She appeared to want no trifling. Her husband answered coldly,—

"Wife, that is clearly the house-girl's own business."

"William," said Mrs. Pecksniff, "we can't afford to be indifferent about this matter. All the neighbors are talking about it."

"That's their business," replied Mr. Pecksniff.

"Well," said Mrs. Pecksniff indignantly, "if you don't speak to her about it, William, I'm going to speak to her myself."

"That's your business," said Mr. Pecksniff.

Mrs. Pecksniff burst into tears. Between sobs she said:

"William, I hate to tell you, but the people are saying that you gave Bridget her clothes. Oh William, *William*, what do you think of that?"

Mrs. Pecksniff's misery was complete when her husband without the least sign of emotion calmly replied,—

"That's my business."

Silas Xavier Floyd.

**When Greek
Met Greek**

It was the annual bloody football game between the Richard Harding Davis Pie Factory and the Glad Hand Laundry. This was the great sporting event of the year in New Chicago, signaling, as it did, the close of the apple-pie and soft-shirt season, after which would come the pumpkin pie and the boiled shirt.

All the town and the surrounding country had turned out to witness the contest. One side of the field was beautiful with massed Lard White and Dried-Apple Mauve, the colors of the pie factory; and from the throats of the pie-factory cohorts pealed forth, ever and anon, the hoarse pie-factory yell:

"Punk-in pie! Punk-in pie!
Eat the Dicky brand and die!"

Opposite were ranged the laundry supporters, both men and women, each proudly wearing a receipted laundry bill and flaunting the laundry colors of

\$1,200 a Year for Life

Secured by Small Monthly Payments

There is nothing speculative about crude rubber. It can be sold every day in the year, in every market in the world and at a staple price that has been steadily advancing for many years. For a quarter of a century the world's supply of crude rubber has always been spoken for months before it has reached a civilized market. It can be gathered every day in the year, irrespective of weather or season. The ignorant and improvident natives who gather it to-day almost invariably "tap to death" the wild tree that brings them their golden harvest, and in the virgin jungle no white man can live to guide and oversee them. Hence, the price has doubled in ten years, and the question of the world's supply of rubber for the future becomes of vast moment.

We are changing the production of Crude Rubber from the primitive and destructive method heretofore employed to the most scientific and economic plan known to modern forestry. No industry ever underwent so radical a development as we are now engaged in without making immensely wealthy those who accomplished the change.

We have 6,175 acres of land in the State of Chiapas, Mexico, the finest rubber land in all the world, and we are developing this land into a commercial rubber orchard under the most successful conditions and plans known to scientific forestry. We are selling shares in this plantation, each representing an undivided interest equivalent to an acre of land.

Any one can own such shares, or acres, by paying for them in small monthly instalments. Supposing you buy only five. You pay \$20 a month for 12 months, then \$15 a month for 12 months, then \$10 for a limited period, until you have paid the full price of the shares in the present series—\$276 each; but during this period you will have received dividends amounting to \$210 per share; hence, the actual cost of your shares is only \$66 each, and from the maturity period onward, longer than you can live, they will yield you or your heirs a yearly income of \$1,200. This most conservative estimate is based on Government reports of the United States and Great Britain, the most reliable sources of information in the world. Of course, if you buy 10 shares your income would be \$2,400 yearly, or better still, 25 shares will yield \$6,000 a year.

Five Acres, or Shares, in our Rubber Orchard, planted to 1,000 Rubber trees, will at maturity yield you a sure and certain income of \$100 a month for more years than you can possibly live. Your dividends average 25 per cent. during the period of small monthly payments.

Every possible safeguard surrounds this investment. The State Street Trust Co. of Boston holds the title to our property in Mexico as trustee. We agree to deposit with them the money paid in for shares, and we file with them sworn statements as to the development of the property. This company also acts as registrar of our stock. You are fully protected from loss in case of death or in case of lapse of payments, and we grant you a suspension of payments for 90 days any time you may wish. Furthermore, we agree to loan you money on your shares.

We can prove to you that five shares in this investment, paid for in small monthly instalments, will bring you an average return of twenty-five per cent. on your money during the period of payment, and will then bring you \$100 a month for more than a lifetime. Send us at once \$20 as the first monthly payment to secure 5 shares—\$40 for 10 shares—\$100 for 25 shares (\$4 per share for as many shares as you wish to secure). This opens the door for yourself, not to wealth, but to what is far better, a competency for future years, when perhaps you will not be able to earn it. We already have hundreds of shareholders scattered through 40 States who have investigated and invested. Our literature explains our plan fully and concisely, and proves every statement. It will be sent to you immediately, on request.

Mutual Rubber Production Company

103 Milk Street, Boston, Mass.

Rust and Indigo. Across the gridiron they hurled their slogan, a watchword which had struck terror into thousands of hearts:

"Collar and cuff! Collar and cuff!
Wrong side out and edges rough!"

A deafening uproar, a surge of Lard White and Dried-Apple Mauve, and the pie-factory eleven and substitutes trotted upon the field. Another deafening uproar, a surge of Rust and Indigo, and upon the field trotted the laundry eleven and substitutes.

The pie-factorians had been strenuously and wisely trained for the struggle, having been gradually led from plain custard to mince, and now it was asserted that nothing could kill them. Not a whit behind them in preparation were the laundryites, who had been toughened by a rigorous application of the laundry's most celebrated and vicious work.

Being on a gridiron, the laundryites were considered to have, by reason of more or less familiarity with irons in general, a slight advantage, but the pie-factorians asked no odds.

The two teams took position; the whistle sounded shrilly, and Red Henri, champion collar-notcher of the county, kicked off for the laundryites. High flew the sphere, hurtling like a huge blunder-beetle, and fell snug into the waiting arms of James, chief apple-slice counter and quarter-back of the pie-factorians.

Onward he scooted like a deer, dodging now here, now there, until only one enemy remained in his path. Head down, secure in his impenetrable head-harness of pie-crust, James made straight at this, the only obstacle. But if he calculated that the laundryite would evade the rush he was mistaken.

Crash! Like two locomotives they came together. The pie-factorian violently recoiled from the laundryite's stomach and dropped, half stunned.

Under his suit the laundryite was wearing a Glad Hand ironed shirt!

From the Rust and Indigo went up a great shout, answered by a howl of derision from the Lard White and Dried-Apple Mauve.

The elevens lined for the scrimmage.

"Eat 'em up! Eat 'em up!" yelled the pie-factorians, encouraging their team.

"Tear 'em to pieces! Tear 'em to pieces!" yelled the opposing mob, in their turn appealing to their representatives.

Thus the baser passions of the elevens were stirred to the utmost.

"Blueberry-canned-squash-dried-apricot-mince!" signalled Quarterback James, with murder in his mind.

The two lines heaved and strained and fell towards the laundryite goal.

The pie-factorians had gained. Weighted each with a pie that he had consumed just before the game, the players were far too heavy for their opponents.

In vain the Rust and Indigo warriors offered their shirt-armored bodies to stay the impact of the Lard White and Dried-Apple Mauve. They were powerless against the deadly combinations of the pie-factorians, and at last, upon the signal, "Preserved strawberry—peach butter—lunch-counter lemon!" in their favorite wedge-shaped formation the foemen went over for a touch-down.

WOULD YOU WIN PLACE? Be clean, both in and out. We can not undertake the former task—that lies with yourself—but the latter we can aid with HAND SAPOLIO. It costs but a trifle—its use is a fine habit.

THE PORES are the safety-valves of the body. If they be kept in perfect order by constant and intelligent bathing, a very general source of danger from disease is avoided. HAND SAPOLIO is unequalled as a gentle, efficacious pore-opener.

HAND SAPOLIO neither coats over the surface, nor does it go down into the pores and dissolve their necessary oils. It opens the pores, liberates their activities, but works no chemical change in those delicate juices that go to make up the charm and bloom of a perfect complexion. Test it yourself.

And the day was won. Not the most desperate efforts of the laundryites, not their superior team-work (three of their number having driven laundry wagons), could avail to offset the score. And although the Lard White and Dried-Apple Mauve did not again cross the goal-line, still, when the final whistle blew the tale read, "Five to nothing."

High rang the triumphant chorus:

"Punk-in ple! Punk-in ple!
Eat the Dicky brand and die!"

But back challenged the sturdy, all unconquerable, even though seemingly conquered, ranks of the Rust and Indigo:

"Collar and cuff! Collar and cuff!
Wrong side out and edges rough!"

Edwin L. Sabin.

THE JOGERFY LESSON

By Norman H. Pitman

OF isthmuses, continents, capes, and canals

The pupils had shown off their knowledge most fully.

Said the senior director, "The b'ys and the gals

Hev sartinly got up their jogerfy bully.

Jist one other question I'd like to perpound.

What is a-volcaner? Who'll tell fer a penny?"

A moment of silence, intense and profound.

"Hit's a mountain whut's sick at the stomick," said Bennie.

An Ambitious Woman

"My grandmother was an awful ambitious woman," said a native of a well-known island off the coast of Maine. "and when she was dying and the doctor had told her she had only about an hour to live she asked her daughter to bring her some green apples. She sat up in bed and pared two panfuls of them, and then lay back with a satisfied sigh. "Well," said she. "I'm determined that the folks that come to my funeral shall have enough apple-sass for once in their lives."

A. V. Spencer.

No Wonder

WE were discussing a lecture delivered the evening before by some Eastern speaker,—Theodore Tilton I believe it was,—who had for the first time—some thirty years ago—visited the Iowa village in which we lived.

Someone remarked that it sounded very odd to our unaccustomed ears to hear "either" and "nēither" pronounced "either" and "neither."

Grandma, who had been listening to the conversation in silence, looked up

The very soul of the malt—
delicious, healthful, invigor-
ating, and *absolutely* pure—
the perfection of brewing—is

Pabst Blue Ribbon



from her knitting and said, "'Pears like neither sounds jest as nat'ral to me as neither does, though," she added reflectively, "I don't know nuther."

Gazelle Stevens Sharp.

SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR

By Minna Irving

AROUND the richly laden board
 Thanksgiving Day we meet,
 And render thanks with grateful hearts
 For what we have to eat;
 But always at this time of year,
 When skies are cold and murky,
 I'm mostly thankful for the fact
 I was not born a turkey.

**Little Red
 Riding-Hood**

LITTLE EMILY KINGSBURY, aged four, who attends the kindergarten and calls it the "kidney-garden," was being examined as to the senses.

"What are your ears for, Emily?"
 "To hear with," was the answer.
 "And what are your eyes for?"
 "To see with."
 "And what is your nose for?"
 "To blow," was the innocent answer.

**The Four
 Types**

BETTY was a typical Richmond negro. She would do anything for what she considered "the quality;" her industry in their service was unflagging, and her respect almost servile, but—well,

she stopped there. Betty was my cook.

I had a visitor one day, a woman who had seen better days "befo' the wah." but at that time in very poor circumstances indeed. I was ill, and as I could not leave my room to entertain her in the dining-room, I directed Betty to prepare a nice luncheon for my guest and bring it to my room. Betty disappeared and failed to reappear, and the luncheon did not materialize.

The other members of the family were out, and as I could not go in quest of my recreant servant, I advised my guest to do so; but she said it did not matter, she was not hungry, etc., and I had the mortification of seeing her depart, finally, in a lunchless condition.

Betty came in immediately, evidently having waited for her departure.

"Why did you let Mrs. B—— go away without luncheon, Betty?" I asked.

"'Cause Ah hab sumpin' bettah to do a-wukken fo' you," she replied diplomatically, "dan waitin' on de lakes o' her."

"Why, Betty, what is the matter with Mrs. B——? I think her a very nice roman."

Purity — above everything — distinguishes Schlitz beer from the common.

There's a difference, of course, in the barley, the hops, the yeast. We use the costliest materials. But the goodness of Schlitz is mainly due to its healthfulness.

The artesian water used—the absolute cleanliness—the filtering of the beer, and of even the air that touches it—the extreme aging—the sterilizing of every bottle after it is sealed; those are the facts that make Schlitz what it is.

Those are the reasons why the demand for Schlitz exceeds a million barrels annually.

Yet no standard beer—no beer that is good for you—costs less.

Ask for the Brewery Bottling.



"Law sakes, Missus, didn't ye see she's done trim her dress wid cotton velvet? She ain't nothin' but a half-strainer."

"A half-strainer! What is that, Betty?"

"Doan you know? Dat's funny! All de niggers know dere is jes fou' kins ob buckra folks in de whole worl'—de bo'n gen'leman is one kine, an' de made gen'leman is anudder, de half-strainer is de nex', an' de poo' white trash is de las'. De bo'n gen'leman doan hev ter studdy manna's an' slick up lake de made gen'leman do ter mek folks believ he's a gen'leman; an' de half-strainer is one dat strain an' strain ter be lake a gen'leman, an' git on'y half way fum de poo' white trash a'ter all. Ma people wuz quality folks, an' Ah cayent was ma time waitin' on no udder kine."

Margaret Sullivan Burke.

**His Married
Name**

"CAN anyone tell me why Saul was called Paul?" asked a Sunday-school teacher of her class.

After a long silence Johnny answered, "I guess it was because he got married."

Ruth Norman.

DE LAWD'LL SEE YO' FROO

By Frank A. Marshall

SOMETIMES de sky got lots o' gray

An' mighty little blue,

But jes' yo' keep a-peggin' 'way—

De Lawd'll see yo' froo.

Yo' keep a-peggin' 'way,

Da's all yo' got to do;

Jes' do yo' duty day by day,

Be suah yo' don' fuhgit to pray—

De Lawd'll see yo' froo.

Ah wen' to Him de oddah day

An' ast Him what to do.

He said, "Yo' keep a-peggin' 'way

An' Ah will see yo' froo."

Yo' keep a-peggin' 'way

An' jes' be good an' true;

Be suah yo' don' fuhgit to pray,

An' jes' yo' keep a-peggin' 'way—

De Lawd'll see yo' froo.

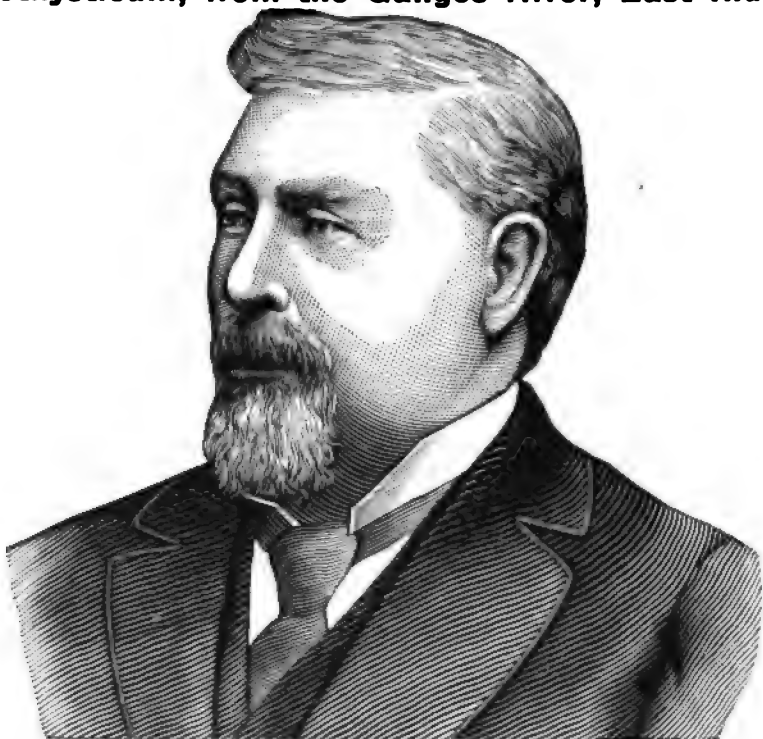
**A Hospital
Episode**

IT was during the latter half of my second year in a training-school for nurses near Boston. Hours on duty were from seven A.M. to eight P.M., and as it was now seven P.M. I hurried my remaining duties that an engagement to attend the theatre that evening might not be delayed longer than necessary.

A WONDERFUL SHRUB

Cures Kidney and Bladder Diseases

Positive Specific Cure is Found in a New Botanical Discovery, the Wonderful KAVA-KAVA SHRUB, called the Piper Methysticum, from the Ganges River, East India.



MR. JAMES THOMAS, 120 E STREET, N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

acts directly on the Kidneys and cures by draining out of the Blood the poisonous Uric Acid, urates, etc., which cause disease, and is certainly Nature's Own Remedy in curing disorders of the Kidneys and Bladder, such as Bright's Disease, Rheumatism, Gravel, Pain in Back, Difficult or too frequent Passing Water, Dropsy, etc. It produces marvellous results, as its successful use on hopeless cases in Hospitals, when all other Remedies known to medical science have failed, is positive proof. Too much space is required to give the particulars of the remarkable results procured through the use of this Wonderful Remedy by the **Staff of Suffolk Hospital, Boston, Mass.; Dr. Sterling Hays, Beckville, Texas; Dr. Matchette of the Board of Health, Bourbon, Ind.,** and numbers of other well-known Physicians.

Mr. T. J. Smith of Idaho Falls, Idaho, Loan, Land and Immigration Agent of the Union Pacific Railroad, writes: "ALKAVIS SAVED MY LIFE. Was confined to the house, being treated for Appendicitis, did no food but milk for fifteen days. Took first dose of Alkavis Saturday before dinner. At on Monday passed a gravel stone as large as a man, and on the following days hundreds of small ones, and Uric Acid granules as much as a table-spoonful. The Five Dollars' worth I bought cured me. I am a travelling man, and have induced a great many in different States to send for Alkavis, and every one so far as I know was cured and are living."

witnesses of the wonderful curative powers this medicine possesses."

Mr. James Thomas, Washington, D. C., an honorable and trusted employee of the Board of Review, Bureau of Pensions, Department of the Interior, sent particulars of his wonderful cure by Alkavis after the best physicians had failed.

Hundreds of ladies, including Mrs. Mary Fox, Seymour, Iowa; Miss A. Van De Hey, 473 Burnside St., Portland, Oregon; Mrs. James Young, Kent, Ohio, also testify as to its wonderful curative powers in Kidney Diseases and other disorders peculiar to women.

That you may judge the value of this Great Discovery for yourself, **we will send you one large dose by Mail, Free**, also all of the Testimonials (in full) referred to above, and thousands of others. It is a sure specific and cannot fail. Address,

The Church Kidney Cure Company, No. 403 Fourth Avenue, New York City, N. Y.

How my heart had swelled with pride on realizing that I was head nurse in a male surgical ward. My dainty white cap and apron received special attention, and no opportunity was lost to impress upon my "junior" and "probationer" that the example of their "superior" might well be emulated.

At seven-fifteen I was in the midst of an evening "sponge" when Miss C——, the aforementioned probationer, appeared behind the screen with:

"A new patient, Miss A——. What shall I do with him?" at the same time handing me a permit.

"Always the way when I have a little outing in view," I thought with chagrin. "That means that I won't get off duty until half-past eight, and the first act missed." But professional dignity must be maintained, and turning to Miss C—— I said,—

"Does he look very sick?"

"I should think that there is nothing in the world the matter with him," was her reply.

"I'll look at him," I said, with a hasty glance at the "permit," at the same time following Miss C—— to the ward sitting-room.

A distinguished-looking man of about fifty years arose at our entrance, but before he could utter a word I motioned him to be seated and placed my finger over his pulse, at the same time eying him critically.

"I presented a permit, nurse," he said, with a puzzled look.

"And I received it," was my reply. I did not tell him that all I saw on it was the superintendent's name at the bottom.

Now, an inflexible rule in all training-schools is that each patient on his admission must take a bath—a tub—unless otherwise ordered.

This gentleman's appearance was immaculate, neither did he have any extra apparel, and I wondered at his having been admitted as a ward patient. But time was passing, and I told Miss C—— to proceed as usual, at the same time assigning him a number in a low tone to Miss C——.

Rushing back to complete my task, I had barely reached the patient's bedside when Miss C—— again appeared with an expression which beggars description.

"Well," I said impatiently, "what now?" She pushed the permit under my nose and I read,—

"Admit bearer to see number 7 after visiting hours."

"Great Heaven! where is he?" I exclaimed, growing hot and cold by turns.

"Sitting on the edge of the bathtub."

In desperation we rushed to the bathroom: there, sure enough, with an angry glitter in his eyes and fiercely twirling his shining beaver, sat our man on the rim of the bathtub. He greeted us with:

"This is my first experience in a hospital, and, God helping, it will be my last! You hospital people are a lot of cranks! Make a man take a bath before he is allowed to see his protégé! Now, see here, my time is limited and I flatly refuse to comply with this rule."

Explanations followed. Mr. B—— was a wealthy manufacturer of Boston who had run out to see one of his injured employés. He had a true Yankee appreciation of the ridiculous and readily agreed to keep the affair a secret; but that stupid probationer did not, and though undoubtedly my consequent

UNCLE SAM SAYS IT'S ALL RIGHT.

Uncle Sam in the person of Ten Government Officials, has charge of every department of our distillery. During the entire process of distillation, after the whiskey is stored in barrels in our warehouses, during the seven years it remains there, from the very grain we buy to the whiskey you get, Uncle Sam is constantly on the watch to see that everything is all right. We dare not take a gallon of our own whiskey out of our own warehouse unless he says it's all right. And when he does say so, that whiskey goes direct to you, with all its original richness and flavor, carrying a **UNITED STATES REGISTERED DISTILLER'S GUARANTEE OF PURITY and AGE**, and saving the dealers' big profits. That's why **HAYNER WHISKEY** is the best for medicinal purposes. That's why it is preferred for other uses. That's why we have half a million satisfied customers. That's why **YOU** should try it. Your money back if you're not satisfied.

HAYNER WHISKEY

1 QUART \$1.00
4 QUARTS \$3.20

WE PAY EXPRESS CHARGES IN EITHER CASE.

Send us **\$1.00** for **ONE QUART** or **\$3.20** for **FOUR QUARTS** of **HAYNER SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE**, and we will pay the express charges. We ship in a plain, sealed package; no marks to even suggest contents. If you don't find it all right and better than you can buy from anybody else for double the money, ship it back to us at our expense and your money will be promptly refunded. We ship one quart on your first or trial order only. All subsequent orders must be for at least 4 quarts at 80 cents a quart. The packing and express charges are almost as much on one quart as on four and even at \$1.00 for one quart we lose money, but we want you to try it. **WE PREFER TO HAVE YOU ORDER FOUR QUARTS FOR \$3.20 RIGHT NOW FOR THEN WE WILL MAKE A LITTLE PROFIT AND YOU WILL ALSO SAVE MONEY.**

Trial orders for Ariz., Cal., Col., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Ore., Utah., Wash., or Wyo., must be 1 quart for \$1.25 by **EXPRESS PREPAID**. Subsequent orders on the basis of 4 QUARTS for \$4.00 by **EXPRESS PREPAID** or 20 Quarts for \$16.00 by **FREIGHT PREPAID**.

Remit by Check, Bank Draft, Express or Money Order. It is unsafe to send currency unless you register your letter. Write our nearest office and do it **NOW**.

ESTABLISHED
1868.

THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY,

**DISTILLERY
TROY, OHIO.**

DAYTON, OHIO.

ST. LOUIS, MO.,

ST. PAUL, MINN.,

ATLANTA, GA.,



discipline was beneficial, it required great courage to meet the laughing reminder:

"If a refractory patient refuses to take a bath, interview Miss A——. She'll settle him!"

Elisabeth H. Grog.

THE WICKED ZEBRA

By Frank Roe Batchelder

THE zebra always seems malicious,—

He kicks and bites 'most all the time;

I fear that he's not only vicious,

But guilty of some dreadful crime.

The mere suggestion makes me falter

In writing of this wicked brute;

Although he has escaped the halter,

He wears for life a convict's suit.

An
Unanswered
Question

WILLY, a little five-year-old, who felt his manhood greatly minimized in a bodice and kilt, was very ambitious to put on trousers, and never missed an opportunity to examine and discuss those worn by his little associates. "Oh, when may I wear breeches?" was his daily cry. One Sunday afternoon he was taken to a gathering of children, to whom the Rector, who appeared in his cassock, talked of Bible characters' in language which could be comprehended by his audience, and concluded his remarks by saying in a very kindly tone, "Now, if any little boy or girl wants to ask me a question, I shall be glad to answer it. Don't be afraid, little children, speak right out. Raise your hand and I will see you."

To the surprise of all, it was Willy's hand which responded to this encouragement. His face was radiant with delight and expectation as the Rector discovered the little hand and said, "Well, Willy, what do you want to know? Speak out."

"Oh Mister—oh! oh!" exclaimed Willy, fairly choking with eagerness and the burden of his inquiry, "oh sir, do—do—please tell me—do you wear your breeches under your gown?"

There was, of course, a roar of laughter, but the question was not answered.

Z. O.

A Tubular
Malady

"YES, Miss, my old man he's right poorly. Th' doctor says he won't never be no better."

"But what is the matter? He seems to be strong and healthy looking."

"Yes, Miss, but he's got the chronicles."

"The chronicles?" echoed her astonished listener. "Where—where does he have them?"



Drink
Londonderry
LITHIA
Water



It is used by

People of Refinement in Their Homes

who recognize its superior qualities as a table water and find it indispensable in controlling the subtle **uric acid diathesis**.

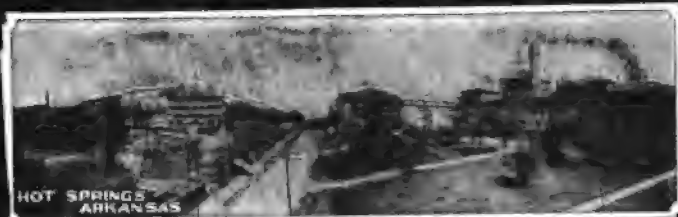
COMBINE HEALTH WITH PLEASURE AND SATISFACTION
by drinking **only** this noted water.

For sale by Druggists, Fancy Grocers and Wine Merchants.

The Still in Half Gallon bottles.

The Sparkling in Quart, Pint and Split Bottles.

IRON MOUNTAIN ROUTE
HOT SPRINGS, ARK. SAN ANTONIO



HOT SPRINGS
ARKANSAS

AND POINTS IN
MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA

ELIGIBLE THROUGH CAR SERVICE BETWEEN
POINTS AND CARS

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ADDRESS COMPANY'S AGENTS OR

H. C. TOWNSEND, Gen'l Pass'r and Tkt. Agt., ST. LOUIS.

W. F. HAYES & S. B. AUSTIN, 225 Broadway, New York.

"In his tubes, Miss."

And it needed a visit to the man's physician before the District Nurse discovered that the man had chronic bronchial trouble.

Mary J. Austin.

CHRISTMAS

By Eliot Kays Stone

A CHANDELIER—

A mistletoe—

A lover near

A maid below—

A scuffle dear—

A kiss or so—

And that is Christmas, don't you know?

After the
Wedding

He.—"It certainly was a pretty wedding, and everything was so nicely arranged."

She.—"That's just what I think; and the music was especially appropriate."

He.—"I don't remember. What did they play?"

She.—"The Last Hope."

G. F. Dryfoos.

A Crowing
Hen

"A CROWING HEN" is usually regarded as a figure of speech, but

Mrs. Jacob Snively, of Locust Grove Farm, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, had an experience with fowls which establishes the fact that a hen may in a moment of enthusiasm crow as lustily as a rooster.

Early in February this lady found a forsaken little peeper (newly hatched chicken) in her barn, which she carried to the kitchen and raised. Late in March another old hen walked off from and forsook a dozen little peepers she had hatched out. These were also carried to the kitchen and placed in the basket of the first orphan chick, which immediately assumed maternal cares and airs, scratching up food and crusts for them and clucking them under her wings to sleep at nightfall.

As the season advanced the chicks outgrew their adopted mother, showing brilliant plumage, which was attributed to their varied bill of fare, so when the sun came out the whole lot was banished to the chicken-yard.

There happened to be in the chicken-yard some young game fowls, and no sooner did one of these spy the intruders than he made an attack on the sturdiest of the newcomers, who bravely joined the battle and soon laid the young gamecock low, upon which the adopted mother hen threw back her head and gave forth a crow of triumph rivalling chanticleer. Her crowing brought out the family, upon which the supposed hen flapped her wings and crowed for half an hour. Nothing could induce her to vacate the kitchen at night, where she crowed so vociferously that she had to be forcibly ejected.

This verified instance of a crowing hen may be of some value to zoölogists,

Get the Doctor Quick !

When an accident happens run for the household bottle of POND'S EXTRACT. *It's the old family doctor*—always ready—always sure, at any time of night. In deep cuts, it stops the blood; in severe burns, from sun or fire, it takes out the inflammation; in bad bruises or sprains it prevents soreness and pain. A bottle of POND'S EXTRACT on the medicine shelf is like having a doctor in the house.

Caution.—Ordinary witch hazel is *not* the same as POND'S EXTRACT.

POND'S EXTRACT is sold only in sealed bottles with buff wrapper to prevent adulteration.

BUILT FOR AMERICAN ROADS

The U. S. Long Distance Touring Cars Are Pre-eminent for Speed, Safety, Reliability & Economy

Factory, 180 Whiton St., Jersey City, N. J.



TYPE C—TONNEAU
Two Cylinders.
Vertical Engine.

Built for service, long runs and hill climbing, simply operated, free from vibration, each part easily reached, no intricate machinery to get out of order

Our book is of unusual interest to Automobilists. Sent free on request.

N. Y. Long Distance Automobile Company
110-114 West 41st Street, NEW YORK

so it must be added that this fowl never developed either comb or gills, but, on the other hand, she never laid any eggs. She lived to old age, leaving the question as to whether she was really a hen with vocal powers or an undeveloped rooster with maternal instincts undecided.

E. S. Bladen.

THE FELLOW WHO CAN WHISTLE

By Sidney Warren Mass

THE fellow who can whistle when the world is going wrong
Is the fellow who will make the most of life;
No matter what may happen, you will find him brave and strong—
He's the fellow who will conquer in the strife.

The fellow who can whistle when the whole world seems to frown
Is the kind of man to stand the battle's brunt;
He's got the proper metal, and you cannot keep him down,
For he's just the sort that's needed at the front.

The fellow who can whistle is the fellow who can work,
With a note of cheer to vanquish plodding care;
His soul is filled with music, and no evil shadows lurk
In his active brain to foster grim despair.

The fellow who can whistle is the "trump" card of the deck,
Or the "whip-hand," in the parlance of the street;
No petty cares nor trifles can his buoyant spirit check,
For a sunny heart can never know defeat.

The fellow who can whistle—he is built on nature's plan,
And he cheers his toiling fellow-men along;
There is no room for pessimists, but give to us the man
Who can whistle when the world is going wrong.

The Sins of the Fathers

SINCE there are no more Maoris to fight, Colonel Gudgeon, the old New Zealand veteran, has been serving his King in the honorable capacity of High Commissioner, or Governor, of one of the last South Sea archipelagoes benevolently assimilated by the British Empire. His capital is Avarua, on the gloriously lovely island of Rarotonga, and there each Monday morning the Colonel "sits" as the High Court of which he is the Pooh Bah, flanked by two copper-colored native brother Justices, in the ramshackle old building where the native band practises "Marching Through Georgia" three nights a week. And then in the evening the Colonel "sits" on the veranda of his beautiful home, "Ngatipa," up in the foot-hills, and spins yarns and dispenses excellent other entertainment to the lucky globe-trotter who is his guest.

The last evening that we had that treat the Colonel told us this tale. He was trying a man for some petty offence, and as the case proceeded the damaging

CRYSTAL Domino SUGAR



A
Triumph
in
Sugar
Making!

Sold only in 5 lb. sealed boxes!

"CRYSTAL DOMINO SUGAR" is packed in neat, sealed boxes, and is NEVER sold in bulk. It is packed at the refinery and opened in the household;—there is no intermediate handling. Hence, no dirt, no waste, no possible adulteration. Every piece alike—and every piece sparkles like a cluster of diamonds, the result of its perfect crystallization. Invariant in form, perfect in quality, brilliant in appearance, no sugar made can equal it in excellence. When buying this sugar remember that the sealed package bears the design of a "Domino" Mask, "Domino" Stones, the name of "Crystal Domino," as well as the names of the manufacturers. You will be pleased the moment you open the box. You will be better pleased when you have tried it in your tea, coffee, etc. It is sold by ALL FIRST CLASS GROCERS, and is manufactured only by HAVEMEYERS & ELDER SUGAR REFINERY, NEW YORK.

The New Passenger Station—Chicago

The new station of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway, which was opened in 1912, this year, will be known as the **La Salle Street Station**. The new building extends along Van Buren Street between La Salle and Sherman Streets.

It is the most conveniently located of any passenger station in Chicago, being in the heart of the business district, and the only one on the Union Elevated Loop.

All of Chicago's Elevated Railway trains stop in front of this station and are connected with it by a covered passageway, so that trains may be taken directly from the second, or third floor level, without descending to the street.

The Main Building is 13 stories high. It has a frontage of 213 feet and is 202 feet deep. Area 43,026 square feet.

The Train Shed is 213 x 575 feet, area 122,475 square feet.

The Power House is 220 x 145 feet, area 31,900 square feet.

Total area of the three above-mentioned is 197,401 square feet, or a little more than 4 acres.

Surface cars, on Van Buren Street, pass directly in front of the station.

Everything about the building has been planned with the idea in view of giving the greatest freedom in movement of traffic, to the end that the requirements of travellers, such as purchasing of tickets, checking baggage, getting to and from trains, etc., may be handled with dispatch, and a very much larger percentage of people accommodated than at the old station. Without calculating the 10,000 square feet in the Lobby and 9,600 square feet in the Concourse, the new station has at least three times more waiting-room than the old, while area in baggage room is greater by four times.

evidence narrowed down to the testimony of one particular old chap who stuck tenaciously to his story. On cross-examination this witness was even more circumstantial and positive, and things began to look rather black for the accused, when suddenly the witness stopped. His eyes bulged from his head, his knees knocked together, his hands were lifted in a groping, protesting, pleading way. Before the Court could ascertain the cause of his extraordinary conduct, the witness, with a wild whoop, dashed out of a side window and was never seen on the island again. Years afterwards the Colonel met him at *Mangaia* and learned the reason of his collapse and flight. It seems that as he was testifying the counsel for the prisoner stepped out of the court-room and presently returned with a big, burly, naked savage from Aitutaki, whom the witness at once recognized. He was the son of a man whom the witness's father had *eaten* in the good old days "befo' the wah," and by ancient Maori etiquette it was incumbent upon the son of the eaten to eat the son of the eater. The wise lawyer had therefore brought the fellow in at precisely the psychological moment.

Vincent Harper.

Two natives of the soil in a New England village were overheard
A Good Start discussing the prospects of one Jim Means, who had forsaken a factory for agricultural pursuits.

"I hear that Jim has gone to farmin'," said one of the village worthies.

"Yaas, he has," was the drawling reply, "but he ain't went into it very steep yit. He has hired a hoss for the summer an' rented a keow an' borrowed a hen to put a-settin' of eggs under an' his folks has give him a peeg, but he ain't farmin' it on the scale I hear they do out West."

"No," assented the other; "still, he's got consididable of a start, an' ort to do well if his eggs hatch an' his peeg thrives an' the keow is a good butter-maker."

J. L. H.

JES' OVER YONDER

Ry A. Nelson Killgore

SWEETES' flowers seem t' grow

Jes' over yonder;

Coolest breezes 'pear t' blow

Jes' over yonder.

Grass seems greener over there

Than it is 'most anywhere;

Seems like no place could compare

With jes' over yonder.

Fishin's th' best ye ever struck

Jes' over yonder;

Ain't no sich thin' ez fisherman's luck

Jes' over yonder.

ED. PINAUD'S EAU DE QUININE



ED. PINAUD'S Eau de Quinine is the best Hair Restorative known. It preserves the hair from parasitic attacks, tones up the hair bulbs, cleanses the scalp and positively removes dandruff.

ED. PINAUD'S Eau de Quinine is also a most excellent hair dressing. The sweet and refined odor which it leaves in the hair makes it a toilet luxury.

Sold Everywhere.

4oz. bottles, 50c. 8oz. bottles, \$1.00

ED. PINAUD'S LATEST EXQUISITE PERFUME



BRISE EMBAUMÉE VIOLETTE

is admitted by connoisseurs to be the most delicate embodiment of the violet odor ever produced.

SOLD EVERYWHERE

1 oz. ELEGANT BACCARAT cut glass bottle, \$2.00

2 " " " " " 4.00

or if not obtainable of your dealer, write to

ED. PINAUD'S AMERICAN OFFICES,

Ed. Pinaud Building, - New York.

ALL SEAMEN know the comforts of having on hand a supply of Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk. It can be used so agreeably for cooking, in coffee, tea, and chocolate. Lay in a supply for all kinds of expeditions. Avoid unknown brands.

CONSUMPTION CURED.—An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections; also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who wish it this recipe in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing with stamp, naming this magazine, W. A. NOYES, 847 Powers Block, Rochester, N. Y.



For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.

An Old and Well-Tried Remedy,

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS THE GUMS, ALLAYS ALL PAIN, CURES AND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by all Druggists in every part of the world. Be and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.

Bigges' trout all seem t' lie
 Head up stream with wary eye,
 Jes' a-achin' fer th' fly,
 Right over yonder.

Hills seem purtier in th' Fall
 Jes' over yonder;
 Ol' Bob-whites are sure t' call
 F'm jes' over yonder.
 If you're tied down home, I vum,
 Can't help feelin' kin' o' glum
 T' think th' bigges' grouse'll drum
 Jes' over yonder.

Nothin' ever goes askew
 Jes' over yonder;
 That's th' way it looks t' you
 Jes' over yonder.
 But when you git there you'll see
 That you've been fooled mightily,
 For suthin' better still there'll be
 Jes' over yonder.

Legal Lore JUST after the war an old darky came up to the Governor and said,—

"Marster, kin you make me jestice ob de peace?"

"Well, Uncle Ned, in a case of suicide what would you do?"

Uncle Ned thought deeply. "Marster, I'd make him pay de costs ob de court and support de child."

Kate H. Wright.

**Her
Sympathy**

NELLIE had heard a great deal lately about the Pope, his illness and expected death.

"What will his poor wife do, grandpa?" she asked sadly.

E. B. H.

No Offence

JIM JOHNSON was the colored man of all chores in the home of a physician in one of our Western cities. He was very fastidious in his dress, and on one occasion took a decided fancy to a shirt owned by his employer. He at once purchased an exact duplicate. Thinking that probably he hadn't done right, he told the Doctor's wife. She said that it wasn't the thing for him to have done, as the shirts might get mixed in the wash. Jim's reply was, "Dat'll be all right, Missus, fo' dey's both de same size an' price."

William Morse.



HIGH AS THE ALPS IN QUALITY

PETER'S

THE ORIGINAL
MILK CHOCOLATE

MADE IN SWITZERLAND

HERE IS A TREAT!

If you have never tasted this "irresistibly delicious" eating chocolate, send for a sample and interesting illustrated booklet *An Excursion of Mont Blanc*. They are both FREE.

It is impossible to describe this surpassing delicacy, made of pure chocolate and finest fresh Swiss milk containing all its cream. It gives eating chocolate a new meaning.

A pure, wholesome confection and a nourishing food. **Easy to digest.** Does not create thirst. The only chocolate that can be eaten freely by children, invalids, and persons of weak digestion.

Insist upon **PETER'S**—the original others are imitations. Don't fail to send for FREE SAMPLE.

LAMONT, CORLISS & CO., Agents
78 Hudson St., New York



100 RECIPES

for
DAINTY
DISHES

EASILY
PREPARED

IN LIEBIG COMPANY'S
COOK BOOK
By Mrs. M. M. Parlow

Published by the manufacturers of the world-known
LIEBIG COMPANY'S EXTRACT of Beef.
Sent free to any housekeeper who will send her address on a
postal to Corneille David & Co., 105 Hudson St., New York.

BREAD MACHINE FOR HOUSEHOLD USE



Sifts the flour and mixes 10 lbs. of best bread
in 3 minutes. Send for Booklet. Agents wanted.

SCIENTIFIC BREAD MACHINE CO.,
(CYRUS CHAMBERS, JR.)

Fifty-second and Media Streets, Philad

The Real Estate Trust Company

OF PHILADELPHIA

S. E. CORNER CHESTNUT AND BROAD STREETS

CAPITAL, FULL-PAID

\$1,500,000

SURPLUS AND PROFITS

\$1,300,000



SOLICITS current Deposit Accounts, allowing Interest ; Buys and Sells Real Estate in and around Philadelphia ; Collects Interest, Dividends, and Income of all kinds ; Issues Policies of Title Insurance to Real Estate and Mortgages ; Acts as Financial Agent for Charitable and Religious Institutions ; Collects Rents, Negotiates Mortgages, and Places Ground Rents ; Receives and Executes Trusts of every description ; Rents Safe Deposit Boxes in Burglar-Proof Vaults ; Takes General Charge and Management of Property ; Acts as Registrar, Transfer or Financial Agent for Corporations, and as Trustee under Corporation Mortgages.

Announcement

THE American Finance & Securities Company, of 5 Nassau Street, New York, has just caused the incorporation of the **American Industrial Development Company**, which under our well-established plans and methods for creating and otherwise making available for investors safe and desirable securities, will occupy, in the active work of the general organization established by us for that purpose, the relative position heretofore occupied by The Development Company of America; the latter Company with the purpose of devoting its entire energies to the enterprises it has already taken up, having, for the time being, withdrawn from the field of taking up and exploiting new projects. The Development Company of America was incorporated by the American Finance & Securities Company three years ago with \$1,000,000 of Preferred and \$3,000,000 of Common Stock. Operating in accordance with the plans and methods of this Company, and which will be strictly adhered to by the new Company, The Development Company of America has been eminently successful, its \$1,000,000 of Preferred Stock having already been retired at a premium and its Common Stock selling to-day at over 70.

The **American Industrial Development Company** is organized upon the same basis, with \$1,000,000 of Preferred and \$3,000,000 of Common Stock; is to carry out the same purposes, and will operate in accordance with the same methods that have proven so successful for the other Company.

As was the case in the sale of the securities of The Development Company of America, the Preferred Stock of the **American Industrial Development Company** is offered at par, accompanied by Common Stock of the same Company as a part of the same consideration.

Of several millions of dollars of securities which have been sold through this Company since its incorporation, all have without a single exception been safe and profitable; in every instance have paid 6% and upward annually; and the present value of such investments largely exceeds the amount of the original investment.

We recommend the securities herewith offered as an investment of exceptional merit, that can be relied upon to pay 6% annually upon the Preferred shares, with every assurance that the Common shares, given as a bonus therewith, will at an early day pay liberal dividends and become highly valuable.

Full information upon request.

American Finance and Securities Company

5 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK



White Star Line.

Direct Mediterranean Service

Two-acton Express Steamers to the Mediterranean and
BOSTON to GIBRALTAR NAPLES GENOA
via Azores **MAARSELLES ALGIERES ALEXANDRIA**

Send for sailing list showing ports of call of different steamers

"Republic"
 15,400 tons

"Canopic"
 15,000 tons

"Romanic"
 15,000 tons

Sailings as follows: **"Romanic"**—Dec. 5, 1904, Jan. 19, 1905, April 9, 1905. **"Republic"**—Jan. 2, Feb. 13, May 3, 1905. **"Canopic"**—Jan. 29, March 12, 1905. **Berthing List open.** Send for illustrated booklet. **BOSTON AND NEW YORK TO QUEENSTOWN AND LIVERPOOL.** Full particulars and rates supplied.

WHITE STAR LINE

1306 F St., N. W., Washington, D. C.; 100 West
 Philadelphia, Pa.; Century Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.;
 State St., Boston; 9-11 Broadway, New York; 40
 North St., Chicago; 21 First St., San Francisco;
 Sacramento St., Montreal; 41 King St., B. I.
 Guaranty Bldg., Minneapolis.

DELIGHTFUL WATER TRIPS via PALATIAL STEAMSHIPS of the

CLYDE LINE

THE ONLY DIRECT ALL
 WATER ROUTE FROM
 BOSTON AND NEW YORK
 TO CHARLESTON S.C.
 AND JACKSONVILLE
FLORIDA
 WITHOUT CHANGE

THEO. G. EGER, G.M.
 WM. P. CLYDE AND CO.,
 GENERAL AGENTS
 19 STATE ST. N.Y.





The Wise Men

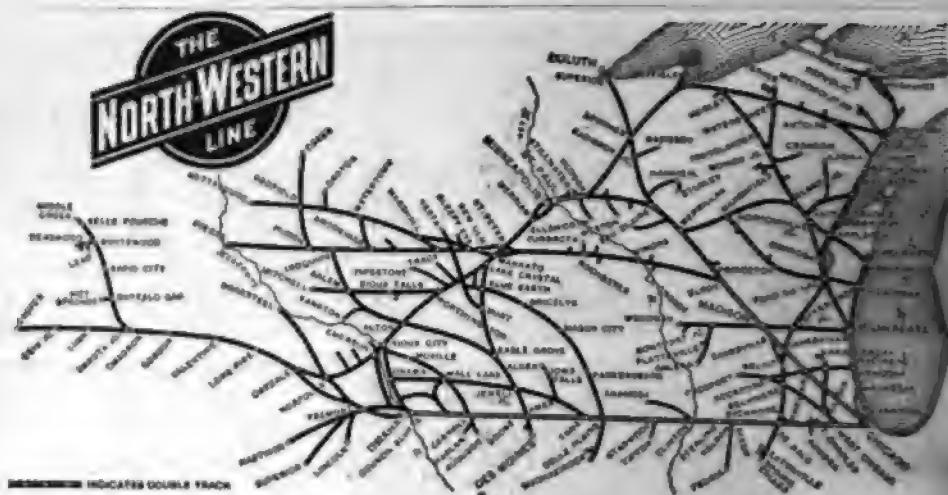
Of the Twentieth Century travel over the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Ry.

The old gentleman in the picture is joyfully telling his friends how, detained until the last moment by business and sorely disappointed at the prospect of a Christmas away from home, he happened to learn of the fast service of the "20th CENTURY LIMITED," how he caught the train just in time, and thus after all is assured of a merry Christmas with his folks.

For information about travel over the Lake Shore address A. J. SMITH, G. P. & T. A., Cleveland, Ohio.

To travelers everywhere the Lake Shore wishes a Merry Christmas.





Opportunity

Opportunity to work

Opportunity to establish a home

Opportunity to acquire a competence

Opportunity to educate your family

Opportunity for the farmer to secure fertile lands cheaply, for the merchant to reach a large tributary country, for the manufacturer to secure raw material, excellent water power, near-by markets and intelligent labor, for the laborer to establish a home and raise and educate his family in comparative luxury. All this is yours in the nine western commonwealths through which The North-Western Line passes.

Ninety New Towns

Along recently built extensions of The North-Western Line, are flattering business opportunities to mechanics, merchants, farmers, laborers and professional men, which are told about in a little pamphlet entitled "Opportunities for Business," sent free to any address on application.

Special low rates are made via The North-Western Line for homeseekers and settlers, concerning which any ticket agent will give full particulars on application. It will pay you to investigate.



YOUR XMAS DINNER

will be far more enjoyable if you use this delightful Relish. Indispensable on the table and in the kitchen. For SOUPS, ROASTS, SALADS, OYSTERS, CLAMS, FISH, SAUCES, GRAVIES, Etc. Imparts delicious flavor; insures good digestion.

THE ORIGINAL McILHENNY'S TABASCO

Used in leading Hotels, Clubs, and Restaurants for nearly half a century. AT ALL DEALERS.

FREE—write for "Tabasco Book"—new and unique recipes.

McILHENNY'S TABASCO.

NEW IBERIA, LA.



MACKINTOSH'S
EXTRA CREAM
TOFFEE

A DELICIOUS OLD ENGLISH CANDY
shaped for every one, especially the children. The purest and most delicious candy made. Just being introduced into this country. Order from your confectioner. He can get it for you if you wish. A 4-lb. family tin sent by mail, charges prepaid, for \$1.00. A sample package sent for ten cents in stamps.
Samont, Corliss & Co., Importers, 78 Hudson St., New York City
(Dealers supplied through them.)



Better than Honey for Less Money

A bee will leave the sweetest blossoms for Karo Corn Syrup. Though lower in cost Karo Corn Syrup is equal to honey in flavor, and superior to it in purity and nutritive value.

Karo

CORN SYRUP

Is a pure, clear, wholesome syrup made of the grain of the corn and retaining the full nutriment of this most nutritious of all cereals. The best syrup for every purpose where a syrup is used.

Sold in 10c, 25c and 50c friction-top tins.

If you cannot get Karo Corn Syrup at your grocer's, please send us a postal giving his name and address.

"Karo in the Kitchen" a new book of original receipts written for Karo Corn Syrup, sent free upon request.

CORN PRODUCTS CO.,
New York and Chicago.

CROWN

PIANOS

**Built of the world's best for the world's
most critical**

For HOMES *of* CULTURE

For ARTISTS

For MUSICIANS

THE artistic beauty and refined appearance of the 1903 models sustain our reputation for leadership in ornate case work, while the choice veneers of our present stock stand unexcelled and augment our reputation as connoisseurs of rare woods. The peculiarly rich singing quality of tone of "Crown" pianos pleases all and will elicit your unbounded praise. Clearly a piano of distinct artistic merit. Send for booklets, catalogue "F," and other printed matter giving full information how to secure, wherever you may live, a "Crown" Piano exchanging your used instrument as part pay if you desire.

GEO. P. BENT

Manufacturer "CROWN" PIANOS AND ORGANS

BEST BLOCK CHICAGO U. S. A.



GOOD NEGATIVES— GOOD PRINTS

UNDER ALL CONDITIONS IF YOU USE

ANSCO and CYKO

Make your negatives on Ansco, the new daylight loading Film. Fits all standard

film cameras. Then use Cyko, the paper that prints by any light.

Ansko and Cyko unequalled for latitude in exposure and development.

MANUAL AND BOOKLETS ON REQUEST. ASK YOUR DEALER OR

THE ANTHONY & SCOVILL COMPANY

ATLAS BLOCK
CHICAGO

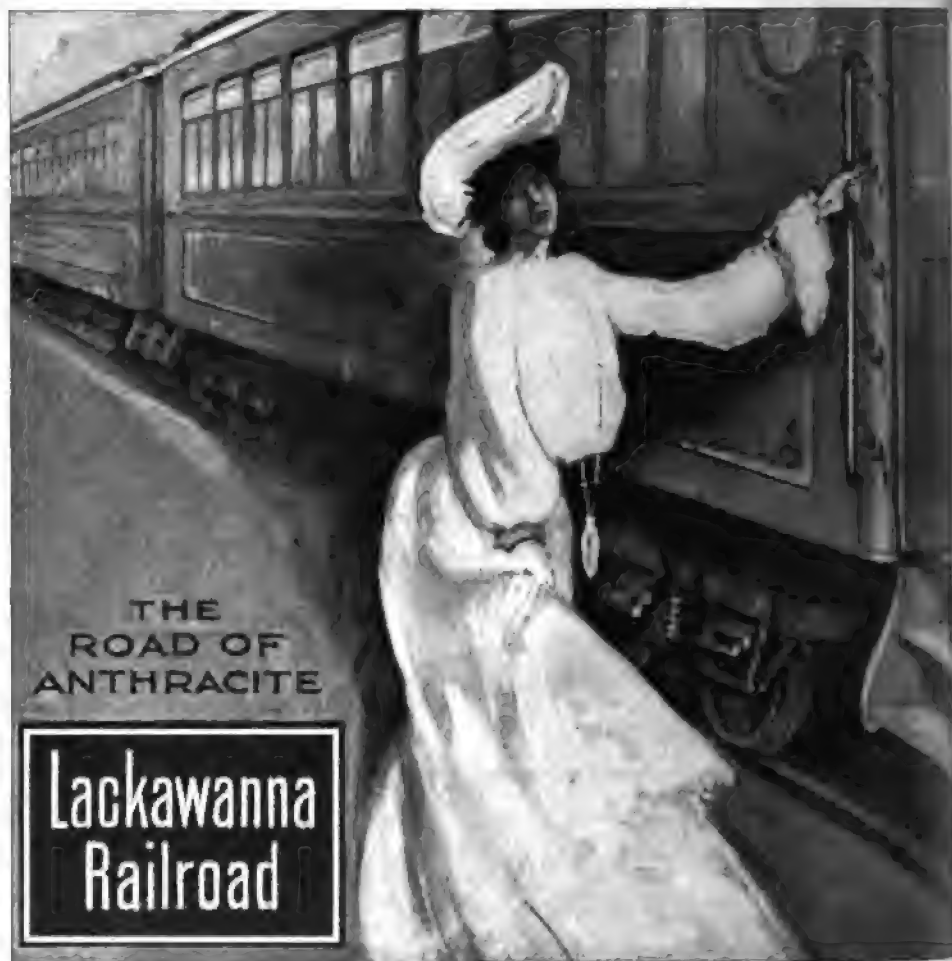
122-124 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

It's Not a Toss-Up

as to the quality of pictures made with a

KORONA Camera

IT'S ALL
IN THE
LENS



BEST WAY BETWEEN NEW YORK AND BUFFALO

Through Cars between New York, Chicago and St. Louis.

Send 2 cents in postage stamps for **THE STORY OF PHOEBE SNOW**, a beautifully illustrated book, in seven colors. Address **T. W. LEE**, General Passenger Agent, Lackawanna Railroad, New York City.

ANNA HELD AT THE SIMPLEX



THEODORE P. BROWN, 9 May St., Worcester, Mass.

May 9, 1903.

Dear Sir:—I believe that in the Simplex you have achieved a great advance in piano players. From a musical standpoint, it appeals to me more strongly than any other device of its kind.

Yours sincerely,

SIMPLEX

PIANO PLAYER

"It Makes Musicians of Us All"

The SIMPLEX is said by the famous musical artists of the world, as well as by its purchasers, to possess the greatest number of points of superiority.

The basic principal is right—construction proper. Each component part is selected with a view to its perfection. Artisans of acknowledged skill only are employed in its manufacture.

Teachers sanction the use of the SIMPLEX by their pupils. It affords an example of correct piano playing that is of great assistance to the student.

MUSIC LIBRARIES. Every SIMPLEX is guaranteed and will last a lifetime.

Send for catalogue.

Price, \$250

THEODORE P. BROWN, Manufacturer

May Street

WORCESTER, MASS.

Provident

LIFE AND TRUST
CO., PHILADELPHIA

N. W. CORNER FOURTH
AND CHESTNUT STREETS
(NOS. 401-409)

Evidence of the skilful and faithful management of the company is found in its exceedingly low expense rate, and the remarkably favorable rate of mortality. For the whole period of its existence, the death rate has been only sixty-one per cent of the rate indicated by the authoritative tables.

The organization of the company affords a strong guarantee of safe management for the future. There is the same need for care and intelligent discrimination in selecting a life insurance company that there is in selecting investments for a trust fund. The question of the first importance in either case is the question of absolute security.

Persons contemplating insurance are invited to address the company for rates and general information.

THE FOUR-TRACK NEWS

An Illustrated Magazine
of Travel and Education

MORE THAN 126 PAGES MONTHLY

Its scope and character are indicated by the following titles of articles that have appeared in recent issues:

Footprints of Columbus in Spain—illus.	Frederick A. Ober
A Watch with a History—illustrated	N. S. Olds
A Journey Among the Stars—illustrated	Frank W. Mack
In the Great North Woods—Poem	Eben E. Rexford
Where Pilgrim and Puritan Met—illus.	Hezekiah Butterworth
In Rip Van Winkle's Land—Poem	Mina Irving
Nature's Chronometer—illustrated	H. M. Albough
Abandoned Farms—illustrated	Howard W. Coggeshall
The Three Ore-gons—illustrated	Alfred Holman
Ancient Prophecies Fulfilled—illustrated	George H. Daniels
The Stories the Totems Tell—illustrated	Luther L. Holden
A Little Country Court—illustrated	Kathleen L. Greig
The Magazine—illustrated	Will G. Steel
When Mother Goes Away—Poem	Joe Cone
A Little Bit of Holland—illustrated	Charles B. Wells
The Romance of Reality—illustrated	Jane W. Guthrie
The War Eagle—illustrated	Mary L. Austin
Under Mexican Skies—illustrated	Maria B. Fenwick
Niagara in Winter—illustrated	Orrin E. Dunlap
Little Histories—illustrated	
Old Fort Putnam	William J. Lampton
Charter Oak Chair	Bessie H. Dean
The Confederate White House	Herbert Brooks

SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS, or 50 CENTS A YEAR

Can be had of newsdealers, or by addressing

GEORGE H. DANIELS, Publisher

Room No. 52 7 East 42d Street, New York

"Suppose I Die"

We have helped the people to answer that question for half a century or more; to make provision for their survivors. We do more: We assist men in making provision for their old age, when the money-producing power is waning. Get our free booklet, "The How and the Why." It brushes cobwebs from the brain.

PENN MUTUAL LIFE

921-3-5 CHESTNUT STREET

PHILADELPHIA

THE LOCKE ADDER

ONLY \$5.00

New and improved model. Made entirely of metal. Size 4x10 1/2 inches.

CAPACITY 999,999,999
ADDS SUBTRACTS
MULTIPLIES DIVIDES

Fastest, simplest, lightest, handiest, most practical and durable low-priced calculating machine. Cannot make mistakes.

Buy a Locke Adder to save your brain

"One should be in every business office."

Joe Lee Jameson, State Rev. Agent, Austin, Tex.

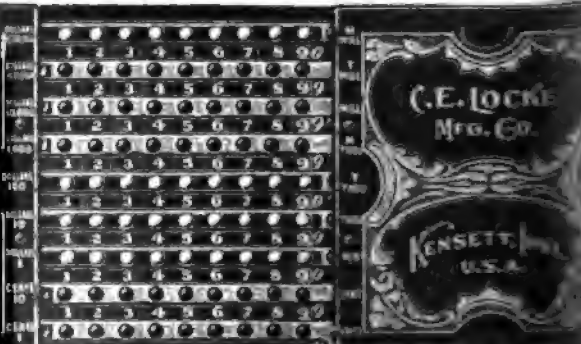
"It is worth its weight in gold."—Chas. W. Thompson, Special Agent, United States Dept.

of Labor, Boston, Massachusetts.

Price \$5.00, prepaid in United States.

Booklet Free. Agents wanted.

C. E. LOCKE MFG. CO., 51 Walnut St., Kenosha, Iowa



STECK

PIANOS

For Forty-six Years

inseparably associated with the highest achievements of musical art.

Used in hundreds of schools and musical institutions because of their exquisite tone qualities and unexcelled durability.

This should be of interest to every intending purchaser of a piano.

Catalogues sent free on application.

GEORGE STECK & CO.

136 Fifth Avenue. New York

THE OLD RELIABLE"

HAVE WORK FOR YOU HONEST Home Work Employment. Thirteen months for one hour daily. Outfit free. 6000 are now employed. Address **MAN'S OPPORTUNITY CO., Toronto, Canada.**

Advertise

My special combination list of Dailies, Weeklies and Magazines MAILED FREE. Good lists for Mail Order Advertisers of \$10 and upward. Known Business Builders for Beginners. Advertising Campaigns outlined. What have you to sell?
RUDOLPH QUENTNER 104 FULTON STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

Musical Instruments

At Wholesale

Send to-day for our free, illustrated catalogue of pianos, organs, violins, guitars, banjos, mandolins, accordions, band and orchestra instruments, strings, and supplies at wholesale prices. Enclose four cents in stamps for mailing. Everything from a piano to a jew's-harp. Every instrument guaranteed.

LOUIS VITAK

204 Wabash Ave.

Dept. K CHICAGO



PIANO Do You Want a Genuine Bargain

Hundreds of Upright Pianos returned from renting to be disposed of at once. They include Steinways, Knabes, Fischers, Sterlings and other well known makes. Many can not be distinguished from new, yet all are offered at a great discount. Uprights as low as \$100. Also beautiful New Uprights at \$125, \$135, \$150 and \$165. A fine instrument at \$220, fully equal to many \$400 pianos. Monthly payments accepted. Freight only about 25. Write for particulars. A great saving assured. Strongest guarantee. Illustrated Piano Book Free.

LYON & HEALY, 40 Adams St., CHICAGO.

World's largest music house; sells everything known in Music

The Chase & Baker Piano Player

is a complete musical education delivered to you at one time, available for instant use. In it there is music for everybody at any time and always. The pleasure is all yours. The work is all the piano player's. It is the ideal of music without drudgery.

The Chase & Baker Company

New York Salesroom: 236 Fifth Avenue

BUFFALO, N. Y.





THE RESTLESS AMERICAN

He is bound to go somewhere and cannot do better than get a copy of the Illustrated Catalogue of the "Four-Track Series"—the New York Central's books of travel and education—then he can select the particular book or books he wants and they will be sent free on receipt of the postage. The Illustrated Catalogue will be mailed free on receipt of a two-cent stamp by George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York.

250,000 RESTLESS AMERICANS

are reading THE FOUR-TRACK NEWS each month and growing more and more desirous of seeing the charming places described and illustrated in this "little giant" among the magazines.

Only 50 cents a year or five cents a copy at newsdealers, or address George H. Daniels, Publisher, Room 82, 5 and 7 East 42d Street, New York.

HOPKINS & ALLEN NEW MODEL LEVER ACTION RIFLES

Shoots 22 short or long rim fire cartridge. 20-in. barrel. Weight, 4 lbs. Prepaid to any Express Office in U. S. PRICE, \$4.50 No. 822

Take-down pattern. Barrel accurately rifled.

Case-hardened frame.

Walnut stock.

Send for Catalogue No. 66 of Rifles, Shot-Guns, and Revolvers.

THE HOPKINS & ALLEN ARMS CO., Norwich, Conn.

The
AL-VISTA



**A PERFECT "SNAP"
WHY?—BECAUSE.**

You can take the whole view with one snap, or, with some models, stop the lens at five different places, and thus make five different widths of pictures, all depending on just how much of the view you wish. These are features no other camera possesses.

OUR CO-OPERATIVE PLAN

We now send you any camera described in our catalogue upon a small payment being made. The remainder you may pay in monthly instalments while you are using the camera. Write us for full information about this.

MULTISCOPE & FILM CO.
1206 Jefferson Street, BURLINGTON, WIS.

**THE NEW
WHITE HOUSE
CALENDAR**

TRADE MARK



For 1904. Four sheets 9x12 inches. Exterior and interior views, in colors, of the New White House and grounds. Also pictures from life and autographs of the President, Mrs. Roosevelt, Miss Alice Roosevelt and the children. A Christmas present or holiday card useful for a year.

FIFTY CENTS NO ADVERTISING

Remit direct, in stamps or cash, to
The White House Calendar Company,
[Incorporated]
1040 Fine Arts Building, Chicago, Ill.
Liberal discounts to agents and canvassers.

Royal Diner #125

Indianapolis Combination Table
Library - Dining - Billiard - Pool



High grade, stylish, unexcelled playing qualities. Instantly changed from Billiard to Pool by use of successful patent cam plugs and to Dining and Library Table by replacing top. Quarter sawed oak, fleamish or golden finish. Highly polished. Complete Billiard and Pool outfit of regulation quality, including 4 genuine ivory billiard balls, 20 pool balls, 6 cues, triangle, etc. Price, \$125.00, freight prepaid. Other styles Combination Billiard or Pool Tables, \$35.00 to \$125.00. Sold on monthly instalment plan if desired.

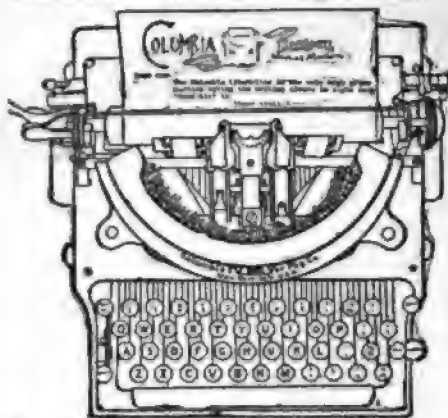
COMBINATION BILLIARD MFG. CO., 31-41 Ingalls, Indianapolis, Ind.

Let a sensible present. This table is just a lifetime of entertainment every member of the family at popular game of billiards and pool. In the living-room it will serve you three times a day, as dining table size 5' standard, 3 1/2' x 7 feet. Elegant and artistically designed. Attractively finished. Are massive beautifully carved legs. Our most popular pattern. Write for illustrated catalog. It's FREE.

Combination Billiard and Pool Table. Freight paid. Four section dining table top, may use but three sections. Best Vermont Slate Bed. Patent Invisible Pockets. Wonderfully Sensitive Solid Rubber Cushions. Imported French Billiard Cloth. Best Workmanship throughout.

THE RESULT OF Experience, Progress, Public Demand.

VISIBLE writing without sacrificing durability,
and DURABLE without sacrificing visibility.



Columbia Typewriter

IT WILL PLEASE your stenographer and its
NEAT WORK will please your correspondents.

Write for Catalogue.

COLUMBIA TYPEWRITER MANUFACTURING CO.
39 West 116th Street, NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

The Typewriter Exchange

We will save you from 25 to 75 per cent. on Type-
writers of all makes. Send for samples of writings,
prices and catalogue. Machines
shipped for inspection.



135 Barclay St., New York
124 La Salle St., Chicago
38 Bromfield St., Boston
817 Wyandotte St., Kansas City
209 North 9th St., St. Louis
536 California St., San Francisco

**I Can Sell Your
Real Estate** no matter where it is
or what it is worth.
Send description, state price
and learn my wonderfully
successful plan.

W. M. OSTRANDER
North American Building, PHILADELPHIA

Affected with
SORE EYES
USE Dr. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

Yost Billing Machine



For Tabulating.

This machine, equipped with wide carriage, will
take paper of any width up to 24 in. according to
model selected. By use of the tabulator attachment
a large sheet can be quickly and easily filled with
columns of figures.

For Correspondence.

The wide carriage can be lifted from the machine
and regular carriage instantly dropped in place. Write
for circular.

YOST WRITING MACHINE CO., 245 Broadway,
New York.

The Perfect Typewriter



The New Manifolded HAMMOND

Writes the best points of all standard typewriters
with unique qualities of its own. The simplest and
most durable. Does the most beautiful work in the
quickest time. Type interchangeable—Three sets go
with each machine, from a selection of over 100.
All languages. Send for catalogue and specimens
of types.

THE HAMMOND TYPEWRITER CO.
Factory and General Offices, 60th to 70th Sts., East River
NEW YORK, N. Y.

To California via Union Pacific and Southern Pacific

From Chicago
Three Through Trains Daily

Equipment of these trains
is of the highest class.

Inquire at

176 Washington Street, Boston
287 Broadway, New York City
802 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

903 Olive Street, St. Louis
53 East Fourth Street, Cincinnati
193 South Clark Street, Chicago

or of

E. L. LOMAX, G. P. & T. A., U. P. R. R., Omaha, Neb.



4 FULL QUART BOTTLES \$3.00
OF THE FINEST WHISKEY on the market.
10 YEARS OLD and guaranteed to please.
THIS IS THE FAMOUS
Old Settlers Club.

A well-known brand that other houses charge \$6 for, but which, by reason of an immense trade and our anxiety to secure new customers, we offer at \$3, express prepaid. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. We will include a Bottle of Blackberry Brandy Free with first order of \$3 or more. Send for price list of other liquors and cordials. Mention this paper when ordering.

CHICAGO TABLE SUPPLY CO.

200-204 STATE ST.
CHICAGO

WHY STAMMER?

We remove the cause and restore natural speech by our new system. "Nature's Method" cannot fail. References and booklet free.

THE NATURAL INSTRUCTION INSTITUTE,
501 Carpenter Street, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pa.

MORPHINE

Free yourself from noxious drug habits. We cure you absolutely and permanently, leaving no craving for drugs or other stimulants. A home treatment prepared by an eminent physician. Free trial treatment. Write today.
MANHATTAN THERAPEUTIC ASSOCIATION
Suite 598, 1136 Broadway, New York City.

PLAYS

Dialogues, Recitations and other Entertainments. Send for free catalogue of over 2000 plays.
The Dramatic Publishing Co.,

222 Dearborn St., Chicago, or 40 W. 28th St., New York.



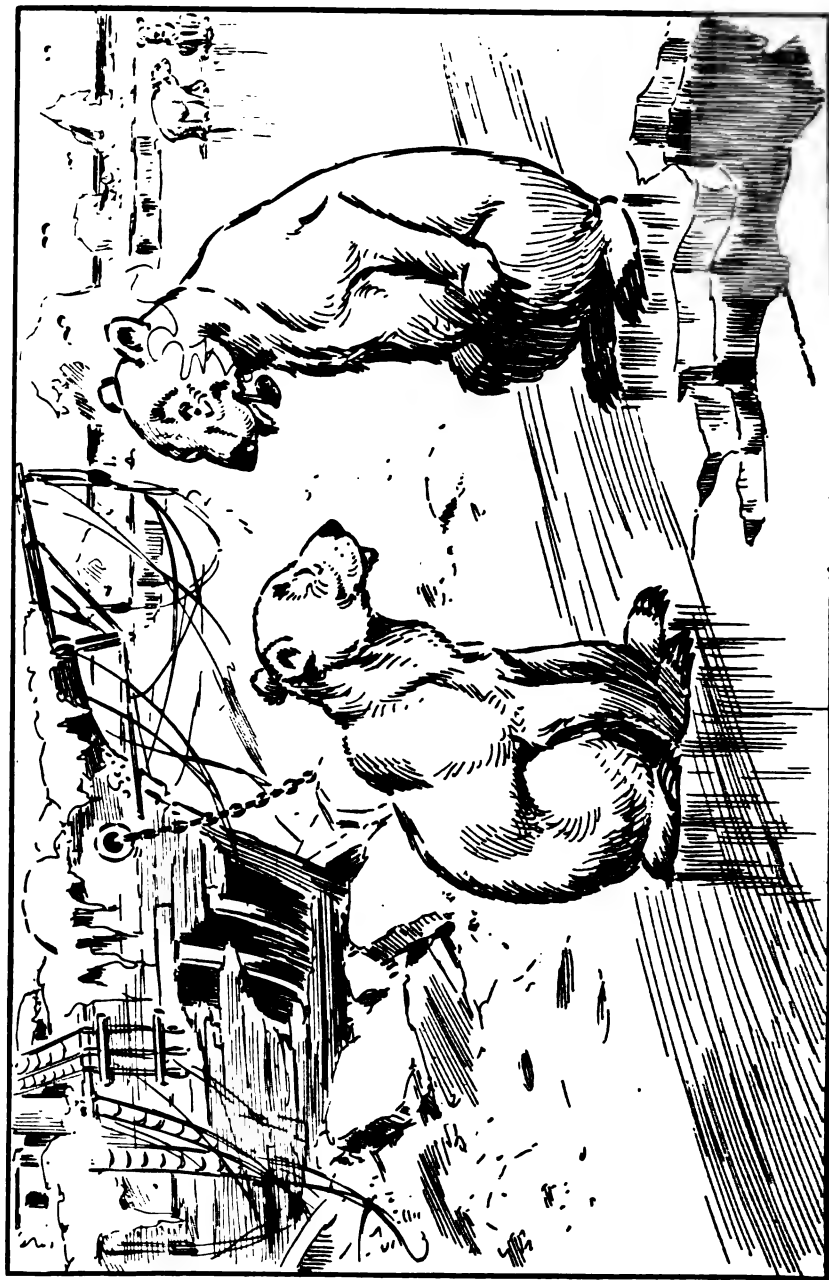
THE CUBA BULLETIN

A beautifully illustrated Periodical about CUBA is mailed monthly for the postage—25c. yearly. Sample copy free on application. Address Dept. Z.

MUNSON S. S. LINE

27 (C) WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK CITY

THE RESCUE OF THE XMAS DINNER.



PAPA.—“Mother, call the youngsters, and I'll go see if I can't scare up something for Xmas.”

Sore Throat

Hoarseness, Quinsy, Tonsillitis
Laryngitis and other throat
troubles quickly relieved
and promptly cured
by the use of

Hydrozone

This scientific germicide is used and endorsed by leading physicians everywhere. It is *absolutely harmless*, yet a most powerful healing agent.

By killing the germs that cause these diseases, without injury to the tissue, Hydrozone cures the patient. Sold by Leading Druggists. If not at yours, will send bottle, prepaid, on receipt of 25 cents.

Prof. Charles Marchand

57 E. Prince Street, NEW YORK

EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR THE SUNSET LIMITED OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC

leaves New Orleans en route to
CALIFORNIA
through
LOUISIANA, TEXAS,
NEW MEXICO, and
ARIZONA.

INQUIRE AT

NEW YORK	340 Broadway
NEW YORK	1 Broadway
BOSTON	170 Washington Street
PHILADELPHIA	109 S. Third Street
SYRACUSE	129 S. Franklin Street
BALTIMORE	109 E. Baltimore Street

L. H. Nutting, General Eastern Passenger Agent,
New York City.
E. O. McCormick, P.T.M., T. J. Anderson, G.P.A.,
San Francisco, Cal. Houston, Tex.

BENSONIZER LUNG CURE

From the
St. Louis Globe-Democrat,
September 8th, 1903.

opening of this term.
The board of education will hold
lar meeting to-night.

NO MORE EXILE FOR CONSUMPTIVES.

A Cure at Last Obtained, After a
Searching Investigation, by St.
Louis Interests.

A few months ago the attention of a few scientific and philanthropic gentlemen of St. Louis was directed to an entirely new method of combating that most dreadful of all diseases, tuberculosis, commonly called consumption. Out of 115 test cases, 77 were completely cured and 26 have shown such improvement that their ultimate recovery is but a question of a few weeks.

So astonishing have been the results and absolute cures in cases pronounced incurable by all old methods that a company has been formed and is now prepared to furnish, at a nominal cost, this cure to all sufferers of the "White Plague." One of its chief features is that patients can remain at home, surrounded by friends and relatives, and in a great many instances, especially in the incipient or early stages of the disease, pursue their daily vocations and still become completely cured.

Patients receiving the same treatment here in St. Louis have completely recovered as rapidly as those in Colorado, New Mexico and Texas. The wonderful results in question have been accomplished by the Bensonizer, and the company which controls this marvelous medical device have located their main office at 417 North Seventh street, St. Louis. They have also located a factory on Easton avenue and a laboratory has been built at Hillside, Mo. The cure will be known as the Bensonizer Lung Cure, and Mr. C. P. Benson, the discoverer of the fluid inhalants which are used, will personally have charge of the affairs of the company. Mr. Benson will personally meet all who call at the office of the company on Seventh street, and will answer all communications from sufferers who are unable to make a personal call.

time off at Crawford's; meet me
me."

Free booklet on request.

BENSONIZER COMPANY,
417-19 N. Seventh St., St. Louis.

FOR CONSUMPTION.

THE REST OF THE XMAS DINNER.—Continued.



MORRIS.—“Come here, children, Papa’s gone to hunt for Krism.”

COXIN

Patented in all Countries.

Trade Mark.

es Away with the Dark Room
 e drawback of Photography was the dark room.
 ant space, space often valuable in small houses.
 ant unpleasant hours spent in developing in semi-
 ness, groping about, knocking over things, and
 one's temper. It meant that no developing
 possible away from the dark room. A recent
 very by a German chemist enables you to
Develop Your Plates and Films

N DAYLIGHT

ie result you got in darkness you get with Coxin in
 ght. It is not a colored developer, but is used with
 developer, and may be used over and over again.
 ie sales of Coxin in Europe have been enormous.

No Amateur Photographer can
 afford to be without it.

oxin" (put up in neat flasks), per flask . . . 50c.
 oxin" Film Boxes (Patented). The
 simplest of all—the least expensive—development
 always in sight. Price . . . 50c.

oxin" Changing Bag should be used in
 changing places from the holder. Made only by us.
 Ask your dealer for Bag.

TRY A SAMPLE

by all Druggists and Photo Dealers. If they cannot
 ly, will be sent to any address on receipt of price.

AMERICAN COXIN CO.

3-110 West 11th St., New York, U.S.A.

Any of these beautiful, genuine Diamonds and fine Pearls, in solid gold, hand-made mountings will be sent direct from our factory on receipt of price, or C. O. D., subject to inspection. Order by number. We send goods prepaid and guarantee safe delivery. Your money back without a question if you are not wholly pleased. Our diamonds are of superior quality and we sell only fine, high-grade goods and list everything at wholesale prices. Our beautifully illustrated Catalogue shows thousands of photographs of the newest and finest goods. IT'S FREE—send for it to day and save one-half on your Christmas shopping. We are the largest concern in the business and one of the oldest—Est. 1860. We refer to the Commercial National Bank of Chicago. Capital \$5,000,000.00. **S. T. ALTEMUS & CO.,** Diamonds, Watches, Jewelry, Sterling Silver, Cut Glass, Novelties, Etc., 101-M Stewart Bldg., Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

Prices shown in image:
 C10 \$3.25
 C11 \$3.50
 C12 \$13.50
 C13 \$7.50
 C14 \$30.00
 C15 \$10.00
 C16 \$19.00
 C17 \$1.25
 C18 \$3.00
 C19 \$3.00
 C20 \$30.00
 C21 \$6.00
 C22 \$25.00
 C23 \$4.00

THE ALTON'S 1904 COW-BOY GIRL

TRADE-MARK.

"Sequel to the Fencing Girl."

Copyright, 1903, by Chicago & Alton Railway.

ART CALENDAR

Four graceful poses from life; figures ten inches high, reproduced in colors by a process far superior to last year's calendar. Highest example of lithographic art.

"THE ONLY WAY"

to own one of these beautiful calendars is to send twenty-five cents with name of publication in which you read this advertisement, to GEO. J. CHARLTON, Gen'l Passenger Agent, Chicago & Alton Railway, CHICAGO, ILL.

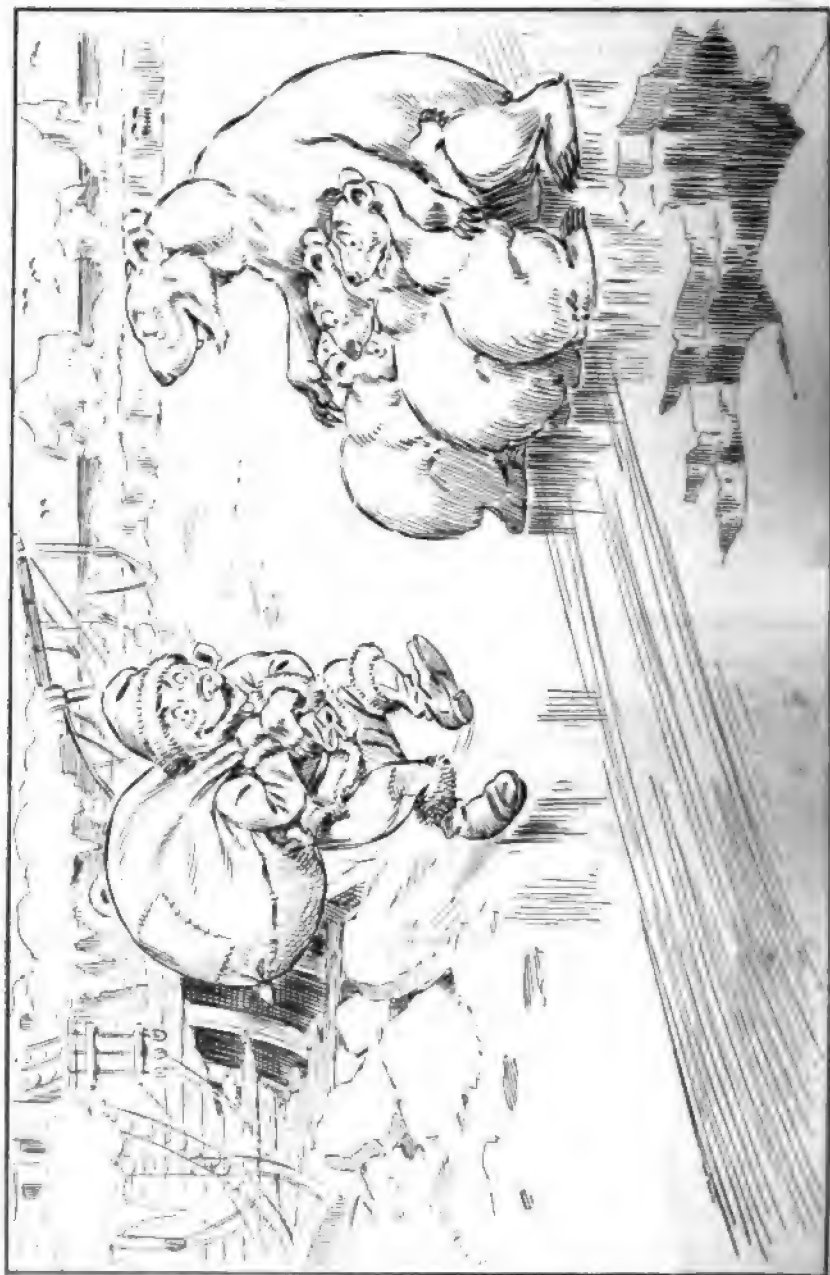
The best railway line between CHICAGO, ST. LOUIS, KANSAS CITY and PEORIA. Take the "Alton" to the St. Louis World's Fair, 1904.

Indians of the Southwest

Where they live and how to get there—their homes, handicraft and ceremonies—an intensely interesting book of more than two hundred pages—written by Geo. A. Dorney, Ph.D., Curator of Anthropology, Field Columbian Museum, an authority on the "Amerind"—profusely illustrated with half-tones from special photos—handsome cover in colors—sent anywhere on receipt of fifty cents—valuable for schoolroom or library.

Address Geo. T. Nicholson, 1315 Great Northern Building, Chicago.

THE RESCUE OF THE XMAS DINNER.—Continued.



"I don't know what, where, it's only Kipling's."



FLORIDA

QUEEN & CRESCENT ROUTE

AND
SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Chicago and Florida Special

On and after January 11, 1904
Solid Pullman Train from Cincinnati
Through Pullman Service from
Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Louis-
ville to Jacksonville and Saint
Augustine.

Also Pullman Service between
Cincinnati, Asheville, Savannah,
Charleston, Atlanta, Birming-
ham, New Orleans and Texas
Points.

Dining and Observation Cars
on all Through Trains

Write for rates and information
W. A. Garrett, G. M.
W. C. Rinearson, G. P. A.
Cincinnati

NEW ORLEANS

SHORT LINE

DEAFNESS CURED

Louisville Man Originates a Simple Little Device
that Instantly Restores the Hearing—
Fits Perfectly, Comfortably, and
Does Not Show.

190-PAGE BOOK FREE TELLS ALL ABOUT IT



Since the discovery of a Louisville man it is no longer necessary for any deaf person to carry a trumpet, a tube, or any such old-fashioned device, for it is now possible for any one to hear perfectly by a simple invention that fits in the ear and cannot be detected. The honor belongs to Mr. George H. Wilson, of Louisville, who was himself deaf, and now hears as well as any one. He calls it Wilson's Common Sense Ear Drum, is built on the strictest scientific principles, containing no metal of any kind, and is entirely new in every respect. It is so small that no one can see it, but, nevertheless, it collects all sound waves and diverts them against the drum-head, causing you to hear perfectly. It will do this even when the natural ear drums are partially or entirely destroyed, perforated, scarred, relaxed, or thickened. It fits any ear from childhood to old age, and, aside from the fact that it does not show, it never causes the hearer irritation, and can be used with comfort day or night.

It will cure deafness in any person no matter how acquired, whether from catarrh, scarlet fever, typhoid or brain fever, measles, whooping cough, gathering in the ear, shocks from artillery, or through accidents. It not only cures but stays the progress of deafness and all roaring and buzzing noises. It does this in a simple, sure, and scientific way. The effect is immediate.

Let every person who needs this at once send to the company for its 190-page book, which you can have free. It describes and illustrates Wilson's Common Sense Ear Drums and contains many bona fide letters from numerous users in the United States, Canada, Mexico, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, India. These letters are from people in every station in life—clergymen, physicians, lawyers, merchants, society ladies, etc.—and tell the truth about the benefits to be derived from the use of this wonderful little device. You will find among them the names of people in your own town or State, and you are at liberty to write to any of them you wish and secure their opinion as to the merits of the only scientific ear drums for restoring the hearing to its normal condition.

Write to-day and it will not be long before you are again hearing. Address for the free books and convincing evidence, Wilson Ear Drum Co., 1304 Todd Building, Louisville, Ky., U. S. A.

THE RESCUE OF THE XMAS DINNER.—Continued.



Para.—“Dang it! I told you not to let those kids make a slide on the sidewalk—



Should be stamped on
all your Collars and
Cuffs. *Look for it.*

Free Catalogue of Styles and Prices.

Will send any one of our 14 Little Indian Pictures
for four (4) cents in stamps, or for fifty (50) cents will
send the whole family of fourteen (14) pictures.

H. C. CURTIS & CO., 425 River Street, Troy, N.Y.

Going all
'Round
the world

100,000
dozen
every year

BRIGHTON
FLAT
CLASP Garter

Will not catch in clothing or hurt the leg.
Made of pure silk web—all colors.
At dealers, 25c.—or by mail.

PIONEER SUSPENDER CO.
715 Market Street, Philadelphia.
Makers of Pioneer Suspenders.

Destiny

If you will look at the lines in your hand and *correctly*
read them, they will tell you that if you wish to reach
your destination with speed, comfort, and safety, you
should take the **Big Four Route**—and that you will
have long life, be very happy, and succeed in your
undertakings. *Remember this when you travel.*

M. E. INGALLS, President. WARREN J. LYNCH, Gen'l. Agt.
CINCINNATI, OHIO.

Jaeger
PURE WOOL UNDERWEAR

Protects
Against
Temperature Changes.

**The Standard Sanitary
Underwear for Men, Women
and Children.**

Endorsed by Leading Physicians.

Also various JAEGER Novelties and
Specialties.

Don't forget that the Best is the Cheap-
est and that the First Wealth is Health.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE.

DR. JAEGER & W. S. CO.'S OWN STORES.

NEW YORK: 16 West 23d St.; 155-157 Broadway.
BROOKLYN: 504 Fulton Street.
BOSTON: 230-232 Boylston Street.
PHILADELPHIA: 1510 Chestnut Street.
CHICAGO: 82 State Street.

AGENTS IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES.

THE RESCUE OF THE XMAS DINNER.—Continued.



"Now, there goes our Xmas dinner!"

SOUTHERN'S PALM LIMITED

TO THE

SAPPHIRE COUNTRY
LAND OF THE SKY
WINTER RESORTS
THE CAROLINAS & GEORGIA
FLORIDA
NASSAU & CUBA

The Southern Railway

Affords elegant train service, with the latest Pullman Drawing-Room Sleeping Cars, operated through between principal cities and resorts, elegant Dining Car service and everything for the comfort and pleasure of the traveller.

"The Southern's Palm Limited"

exclusively Pullman train, Dining Composite Compartment, Drawing Room Sleeping, Library, and Observation Cars New York and St. Augustine (during tourist season).

2 OTHER FAST TRAINS DAILY

N. Y. Office, 271 and 1185 Broadway

ALEX. S. THIBEAULT, P. M. A.

S. H. HARDWICK,

General Pass. Agt.

W. A. TIER,

Passenger Train Mgr.

Vapo-Cresolene

CURES WHILE YOU SLEEP



Whooping Cough,

Croup,

Bronchitis,

Coughs,

Grip,

Hay Fever,

Diphtheria,

Scarlet Fever.

Don't fail to use CRESOLENE for the distressing and often fatal affections for which it is recommended. For more than twenty years we have had the most conclusive assurances that there is nothing better. Cresolene is a boon to ASTHMATICS.

An interesting descriptive booklet is sent free, which gives the highest testimonials as to its value.

ALL DRUGGISTS.

VAPO-CRESOLENE CO.

180 Fulton Street,
1651 Notre Dame Street,

New York
Montreal, Canada

"A land flowing with milk and honey."

CALIFORNIA IS THE MECCA.

Seekers after rest and recreation in a bracing climate, amid enchanting scenery surrounded by fruits and flowers, are going to California this winter in greater numbers than ever before.

The way to go is by the

NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES.

The new trains of this system give a fine service, fast time, and afford every convenience and luxury. Inquire of ticket agents regarding the new facilities.

Four-Track Series No. 5, "America's Winter Resorts," sent free, on receipt of a two-cent stamp, by George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, Grand Central Station, New York.

THE RESCUE OF THE XMAS DINNER.—Concluded.



MOTHER.—"Nay, Papa, you forget that the boys are football players and know a thing or two about tackling."

Learn the truth



Every man and woman, particularly those entered upon matrimony, should possess the new and valuable book

Sexology

by WILLIAM H. WALLING, A.M., M.D.

which sensibly treats of the sexual relations of both sexes, and, as well, how and when to advise son or daughter.

Unequalled endorsement of the press, ministry, legal, and medical professions.

Do you know

that the main cause of unhappiness, ill health, sickly children, and divorce is admitted by physicians and shown by court records to be ignorance of the laws of self and sex?

Sent, post-paid, on receipt of the price.

Fine Morocco binding, \$1.50; cloth-bound, \$1.00

Write for "Other People's Opinions" and "Table of Contents," also our 100-page illustrated catalogue of books of merit—FREE.

PURITAN PUBLISHING CO., Dept. 20, Philadelphia.

A BUNION

CURED

BE YOUR OWN CHIROPODIST. We have a handsome 3-page, illustrated booklet on "How to have Easy, Healthy, happy Feet," which we will mail to any address for a 3c. stamp. Bunions **CAN** be cured. The booklet tells you how to do it in our own home without cutting and without the slightest inconvenience. It also tells about the prevention and removal of corns, growing toe nails and the treatment of all kinds of foot troubles.

POOT REMEDY CO., Suite 562, 59 Dearborn St., Chicago.

MORPHINE

PIUM and LAUDANUM habits cured by **OPACURA**, painless home treatment, endorsed and used by leading physicians. A **TRIAL TREATMENT** sufficient to convince you it **WILL CURE**, sent **FREE**, with book of testimonials mailed. Correspondence Confidential.

PA SPECIALTY CO., Dept. N. - San Antonio, Texas.

SORE EYES **DI ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER**

EYE DISEASES CURED

If your eyes are weak, watery, and you see spots or strings, don't neglect them. These are sure signs of disease and will cause total blindness. No matter how bad they are, they can be cured at your home at small expense, by my method, which is harmless but sure.

The Madison Absorption Method cures Catarrhs, Spots, Scum, Granular Lids, Optic Nerve Diseases, and all causes of blindness. **No Surgical Operation, Pain, or Risk.** It has restored sight to thousands after other methods failed.



KOLA PLANT CURE

FOR

ASTHMA

REALLY MARVELLOUS



A NEW AND POSITIVE CURE for Asthma has been found at last, in the **KOLA PLANT**, a rare botanic product of West African origin. Since its discovery a short time ago, **THIS NEW REMEDY HAS COME INTO ALMOST UNIVERSAL USE** in the hospitals of Europe and America. This is the best proof of the greatness of its powers. **PERSONS THOUGHT TO BE INCURABLE**, including men, women, and children, are restored daily to perfect health by the use of Himaalya.

Thousands of Letters attesting its wonderful cures of Asthma have been written to the importers. Space, however, will permit us to quote only a few of them. These follow:

Dr. J. B. Duncan, the oldest physician of Crawfordsville, Ind., writes: I feel it my duty to tell all I can of the great virtue of Himaalya. Dr. W. H. Wall, a prominent physician of St. Louis, Mo., writes that he used Himaalya on several difficult cases of Asthma, with satisfactory results in every case. Mr. E. B. Hume, 1247 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa., a widely known traveller, writes that Himaalya cured him when physicians and everything else failed. Mrs. W. E. Murgitroyd, East Chatham, N. Y., writes that she could get no relief from Asthma until she used Himaalya. Mr. Alfred C. Lewis, editor of the "Farmers' Magazine," Washington, D.C., was also cured, although he could not lie down for fear of choking, and was always worse during hay-fever season. Mr. Frederick F. Wyatt, the noted evangelist of Abilene, Texas, writes Jan. 31st, that Himaalya permanently cured him of Hay-Fever and Asthma and strongly recommends it to sufferers.

REMEMBER IT COSTS YOU NOTHING. If you suffer from Asthma in any form, do not despair, but write at once to the **KOLA IMPORTING CO., NO. 1162 BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.**, who, in order to prove the powers of this wonderful new botanic discovery, will send you **ONE TRIAL CASE BY MAIL, ENTIRELY FREE.**

STRAIGHT HAIR MADE CURLY

Wash the hair with "California Curly Bark." Only a few applications necessary to make hair curly. First wash makes hair Wavy. Will not injure or change color. A box sent postpaid for \$1. Sample package, 25c.

THE CURLY BARK CO., Box 2546, San Francisco, Cal.

AT YOUR OWN HOME.

Mrs. Harriet Casel, Van Wert, O., was going blind from granulation and cornal ulcers. I cured her at home. You can be cured also. Mrs. Robt. Dick, 666 62d St., Chicago, was cross-eyed 48 years. I cured her without any dangerous operation, by a treatment that never fails. It is absolutely **Painless, Bloodless, and Safe.**

My latest book in colors, with testimonials and my advice will be sent **FREE**. Write full history of your case. No medicines sent until ordered.

P. C. Madison, M.D., R. 231, 80 Dearborn St., Chicago.



Avoid that Tired Feeling
Wear a

BUNKER HILL SUSPENSORY

WHY?

Does Not Chafe.

Can be Kept Clean.

It Fits. Sliding Loop Adjustment.

Is Adjustable. No Buckles to Irritate.

Is Durable. Seamless Sack.

Satisfaction guaranteed absolutely or money refunded. Write for **FREE** booklet.

Write for **FREE** booklet
on Trusses, Braces,
Elastic Hosiery, Abdominal
Supporters, Etc.

Ask Your Druggist, or will be sent post-

paid on receipt of prices named as follows:

277A Linen, 60c. 277B Fancy Silk, \$1.25

277C Silk, 85c. 277D dtd. Silk Pouch, 2.00

277A French Silk, \$1.50



In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

WINTER CRUISES TO THE WEST INDIES

Our Trips to the WEST INDIES

offer the opportunity of visiting the principal islands, also Venezuela, on the finest twin-screw, steel specially constructed for pleasure travel. The itineraries include: St. Thomas, Nassau, San Juan (Porto Rico), Havana (Cuba), Fort de France, St. Pierre, MT. PELE (Martinique), Santiago de Cuba, Kingston (Jamaica), Bridgetown (Barbados), Port of Spain (Trinidad), La Brea Point, Curacao, La Guayra, Puerto Cabello (Venezuela), Nassau (N. P.), Hamilton (Bermuda), New York. You can leave JAN. 9, FEB. 6, or MARCH 8 (the latter may also be joined at Nassau or Havana, returns New York day before Easter) by the

Prinzessin Victoria Luise

Duration 25-30 days—most favor. Number limited to 200. Nothing better for Pleasure and Recreation. "AROUND THE WORLD CRUISES," by S. S. PRINZESSIN VICTORIA LUISE, Sept. 15, 1904, to Jan. 18, 1905; Jan. 26, 1905, to May 20, 1905. Send for booklet.

Hamburg-American Line

35-37 Broadway, New York

1229 Walnut Street, Philadelphia

159 Randolph St., Chicago



THE SECRET OF A GOOD COMPLEXION

ALL WOMEN WHO DESIRE BEAUTY

Should Embrace this Opportunity to Secure a 60-day Daily Treatment of Dr. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers and Fould's Medicated Arsenic Soap for One Dollar.

If your blood is impure, or if you have pimples, freckles, wrinkles, black-heads, redness of face or nose, a muddy, sallow skin or any blemish whatever on or under the skin, you should procure at once these marvellous beautifiers of the complexion, skin, and form. This ad. must be sent with your order. If you cannot send now, cut this out and send when it is convenient, as this offer will be good any time if ad. is sent with your order. Address

H. B. FOULD, Room 31, 214 Sixth Ave., N. Y. Sold by Druggists Everywhere.



PERFECTION IN BUST AND FIGURE

The Knowledge How to Possess It
YOURS FOR THE ASKING.

Would you have a form second to none, perfectly free from all scrawny and hollow places, and a bust as full, plump and firm as you could desire? You may easily obtain these inestimable blessings if you write to MME. HASTINGS, the marvellously successful Form and Face Specialist, of Chicago, for her famous system of development, a discovery which vigorously stimulates the developing forces of nature and makes plump all the flat and sunken places and which creates the most fascinating and beautiful curves. It enlarges the bust measure 6 inches and makes the arms and neck plump and round. The Nadine system is the one praised so highly by leading society women everywhere. It is perfectly harmless and failure is unknown. Special instructions are given to thin women to gain 15 to 30 lbs. more in weight and round out the entire form. While using this treatment you will receive constant care by mail until you are entirely developed. Prominent physicians highly endorse and prescribe it because of its great superiority over everything else known for physical development. Upon request and a stamp for postage, a package, sealed in a plain wrapper, will be sent you containing beautiful photos and full information how to develop yourself at home. Do not fail to write at once to

MME. HASTINGS, A.D., 59 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

THE Keeley Cure

**Alcohol,
Opium,
Tobacco
Using**

Produce each a disease having definite pathology. The disease yields easily to the Treatment as administered at the following Keeley Institutes.

P. D. ARMOUR

Head of the great Armour Packing Company, Chicago, Ill. (in a personal letter to Dr. Keeley), said:

I have sent about two hundred of my employees, from butchers to foremen, and all have been permanently cured. I do not think there is any one thing, or any one man, who ever did the good to humanity that you are doing with your cure.

A Friend's Opportunity.

THOUSANDS of men have been saved from business ruin and a drunkard's grave and their families from misery and poverty by the timely suggestion of a friend. It is unnecessary to depict the sufferings that are being caused by intemperance. There is no one but who would appreciate reading Rev. T. De Witt Talmage's lecture on the evils of intemperance. Probably it is the grandest portrayal of the curse of liquor that the world has received. If you are interested at all, or know of anyone who is in the clutches of the liquor habit, we would be glad to send you a copy of Rev. T. De Witt Talmage's lecture, together with other printed matter, which will clearly demonstrate to you that the indulgence in liquor is a disease and that we have cured thousands and thousands. Please fill out and mail coupon below. We will forward you by mail—plain envelope, sealed—the matter spoken of above, which we believe must be of interest.

CUT OUT AND MAIL TO INSTITUTE NEAREST TO YOU

I would be interested in receiving copy of Rev. T. De Witt Talmage's lecture and other printed matter.

Name.....

Town.....

State.....

ALWAYS ADDRESS THE INSTITUTE NEAREST TO YOU.

Birmingham, Ala.
Hot Springs, Ark.
Los Angeles, Cal.
San Francisco, Cal.
1170 Market St.
West Haven, Conn.
Washington, D. C.
211 N. Capitol St.
Augusta, Ga.
Dwight, Ill.
Charlestown, Ind.
Marion, Ind.
Des Moines, Iowa.

Crab Orchard, Ky.
New Orleans, La.
1628-28 Felicity St.
Portland, Me.
Lexington, Mass.
Grand Rapids, Mich.
St. Louis, Mo.
2803 Locust St.
Boulder Hot Springs
Boulder, Mont.
Omaha, Neb.
Cor. Leavenworth
and 19th Sts.

Fargo, N. Dak.
North Conway, N. H.
Buffalo, N. Y.
White Plains, N. Y.
Columbus, Ohio.
8d & Dennison Aves.
Portland, Ore.
Harrisburg, Pa.
Philadelphia, Pa.
812 North Broad St.
Pittsburg, Pa.
4346 Fifth Ave.

Providence, R. I.
Columbia, S. C.
Dallas, Tex.
Bellevue Place.
Richmond, Va.
Seattle, Washington.
Huntington, W. Va.
Waukegan, Wis.
Toronto, Ont.
Winnipeg, Man.
London, Eng.
Cape Town, S. A.

Details of treatment, and proofs of its success, sent free on application to any of the above-named institutes.

"Non-Hereditary of Inebriety," by Dr. Leslie E. Keeley, mailed on application.

LESLIE E. KEELEY, M.D., LL.D.

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Hundreds of well-known people have indorsed and recommended the Keeley Treatment:

Among them the following:

General NEAL DOW

Col. C. H. TAYLOR

Judge-Advocate-Gen. GROESBECK
Dr. PARKHURST

Rev. Canon FLEMING

FRANCES E. WILLARD

Hon. LUTHER LAFLIN MILLS
Ex-Gov. HASTINGS

Rev. Dr. GEO. C. LORIMER

Rev. T. DE WITT TALMAGE

JOHN V. FARWELL

Dr. EDWARD MCGLYNN

Rear-Admiral WALKER

Ex-Gov. CLAUDE MATTHEWS

Ex-Gov. JOHN P. ALTGELD

Rt. Rev. JOHN SHANLEY

Gen. JAMES W. FORSYTH, U. S. A.



Goat Lymph Treatment For Nervous Diseases

In this treatment—the most important advancement of the century in therapeutics—sufferers from neurasthenia (nervous prostration and exhaustion), locomotor ataxia, paralysis, epilepsy, articular rheumatism, and the troubles incident to premature old age, have the strongest possible encouragement for complete recovery. Our new magazine gives full information. It will be mailed to you on request.

Goat Lymph Sanitarium Association

GILBERT WHITE, M.D., Medical Director

**Auditorium Building
CHICAGO**

**601 Spitzer Building
TOLEDO, O.**

**17 East 52d Street
NEW YORK**

OPIUM MORPHINE and LIQUOR
HABITS CURED. Sanatorium Established 1875. Thousands having failed elsewhere have been cured by us. Treatment can be taken at home.
Write The Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. P 3, Lebanon, O.

CREATES DR. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

CANCER CURED

Dr. B. F. Bye's Oils for cancers and tumors are a painless cure. Most cases are treated at home. Send for book telling what wonderful things are being done. Gives instant relief from pain. If not afflicted out this out and send it to some suffering one. Dr. B. F. BYE, 300 N. 11th St., Indianapolis, Ind.

MORPHINE PAINLESS AND PERMANENT HOME CURE
A Trial Treatment Free. Sent to anyone addicted to the use of Morphine, Opium or other drug habit. Contains Vital Principle heretofore unknown and lacking in all others. We restore the nervous and physical systems and thus remove the cause. Confidential correspondence invited from all.
ST. PAUL ASSOCIATION, Suite 242 48 Van Buren Street, CHICAGO, ILL.

FREE

A Three Weeks' Treatment For Thin-Blooded People. Pleasant to take, harmless to the system. They cure Nervousness, Rheumatism, Indigestion, Blood Purifier and Tonic. A great flesh producer. You derive all the benefit and nourishment from these tablets that you would from the pure blood of a healthy bullock. Thin people gain ten pounds a month. It costs you nothing to try them. Better send to-day.

Ox-Blood TABLETS

Ten cents for the postage on the same. We send Tablets prepaid. W. A. HENDERSON, Dept. L, Clarinda, Iowa.

**JAYNE'S EXPECTORANT
CURES THE WORST COLDS**

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.



OUR FIRST BORN

COOK'S FLAKED RICE

COOK'S FLAKED RICE has stood the test of years and to-day acknowledged by mothers throughout the English-speaking world to be the **BEST FOOD FOR BABIES.** We have hundreds of letters on file from mothers and eminent physicians telling how babies, who were literally starving to death and whose delicate little stomachs would not retain milk or so-called baby's foods, found **COOK'S FLAKED RICE** to agree with them perfectly and many a sturdy little fellow owes his life to our **COOK'S FLAKED RICE** which you will find on sale at your grocer's.

DIRECTIONS

New-Born Infants: One cup Cook's Flaked Rice, one quart water, boil ten minutes, add a pint of milk, pinch of salt, and a very little sugar and strain.

Three Months' Old Child: Use double the quantity of Cook's Flaked Rice (two cups) and do not strain.

From Childhood to Old Age: See illustrated directions on package.

DOCTORS RECOMMEND IT

I have used Cook's Flaked Rice as a food in many of my cases with excellent results. Its nutritive value cannot be overestimated.

Jos. R. Clausen, A.M., M.D.,

Managing Editor "The Medical Times and Register,"

N. W. cor. 55th and Jefferson Sts., Phila.

Cook's Flaked Rice meets all the requirements of a perfect health food for all seasons. I know of no food that equals it.

Justus J. Spreng, M.D.,

Specialist on Stomach and Liver Diseases,

143 West 22d St., New York City.

Cook's Flaked Rice is an excellent food and deserves to be highly recommended.

Carl Weiland, M.D.,

Former Chief of Clinic at Jefferson Medical College Hospital,
315 North Sixth St., Philadelphia, Pa.

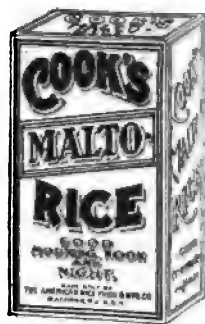
Cook's Flaked Rice is certainly the cleanest and purest food product I ever saw. I can heartily recommend it as highly nutritious and easily digested. For children during the summer months there is no better food.

Chas. A. Hinks, M.D.,

Of the Board of Health,
Fall River, Mass.

A NEW FOOD

COOK'S MALTO-RICE



COOK'S MALTO-RICE is our very latest product. We think a taste will convince you that it is by far the best food ever offered to the public, ready to eat from the package, and a perfect blending of MALT and RICE.

RICE contains more nutriment and supplies more energy to the human body than anything that grows out of the ground, and is the easiest food to digest.

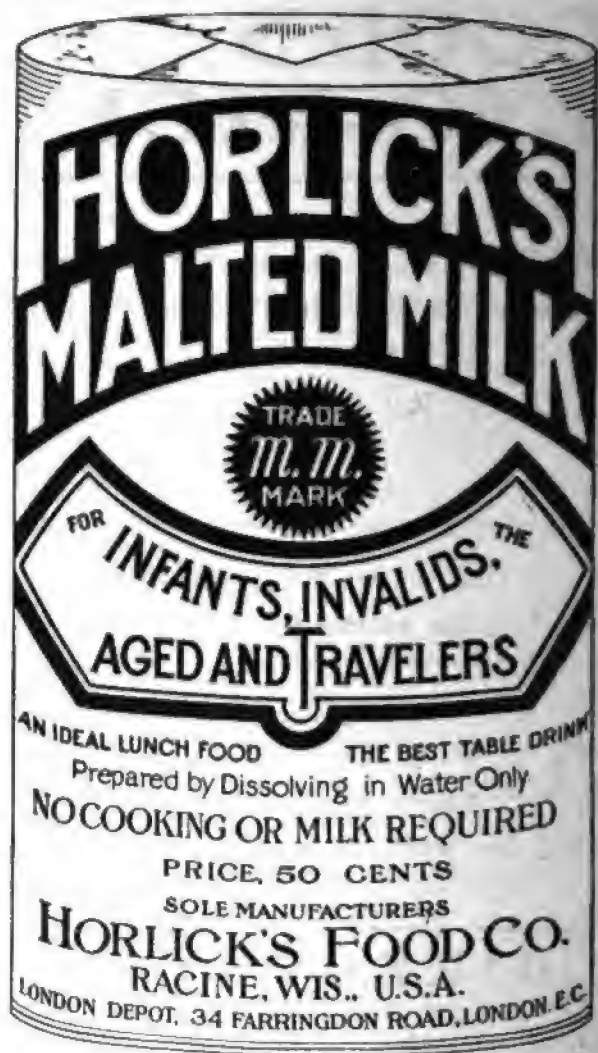
MALT, as a marvellously beneficial stimulant and tonic, man had known for centuries, but only yesterday did he learn to combine it to greatest advantage with his food.

DIRECTIONS

MALTO-RICE is perfectly cooked and should therefore be served direct from package to dish, and seasoned to taste. Most people use a little malt, sprinkling of sugar, and cream. Some prefer fruit juices poured over others syrups, etc., but, "Like the old woman who kissed the cow," everyone to their own taste. It needs absolutely no cooking.

CRISPNESS. Weather affects a perfectly cooked flake and you will notice that it is more crisp on a clear dry day than on a damp one. By putting Malto-Rice in an open pan and setting it on the stove or in the oven for a minute or two, it will at all times become deliciously crisp again, and some good housewives always do this before serving.

A Nutritious Food Drink for All Ages



"The standard of excellence and purity."

Horlick's Malted Milk is a complete, pure food. Composed of pure, rich milk and choice, malted grains. Sample of powder or tablet form, or both, will be sent free on request.

Ask for HORLICK'S at all druggists.

JULY, 1903

LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY
MAGAZINE

COMPLETE NOVEL BY
Ina Brevoort Roberts

The Pretenders

Short Stories By
HENRY WYSHAM LANIER
EDITH ROBINSON
AGNES LOUISE PROVOST
ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT
E. AYRTON
MARCELLE ENDICOTT

An American Housekeeper in the
Eternal City

BY MAUD HOWE

WALNUTS AND WINE

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO

227-231 SOUTH SIXTH ST
PHILADELPHIA

LONDON: 5, HENRIETTA ST., COVENT GARDEN
PARIS: 32, BOULEVARD DES FILLES-DU-CALVAIRE

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for July, 1903

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMING FEATURES ON PAGES 2, 3, AND 4

THE PRETENDERS A COMPLETE NOVEL.	Ina Brevoort Roberts <i>Author of "The Lifting of Finger,"</i>
I UNDERSTAND A Poem.	Seumas MacManus
A ROMAN HOLIDAY An American Housekeeper in the Eternal City.	Maud Howe
THE PURPLE VOICES A Poem.	Aloysius Coll
THE BROKEN VASE A Story.	Marcelle Endicott
THE LIGHT IS WOVEN ABOUT YOU A Poem.	Ernest Rhys
THE MODERN SABINE A Story.	E. Ayrton
TO EGYPT A Poem.	Alice Wilson
THE ODYSSEY OF PISCATOR A Story.	Henry Wysham Lanier
A MAINE ROAD A Quatrain.	Gertrude Buck
BEAUTY IN EXILE A Poem.	Arthur Chamberlain
JACKY A Story.	Agnes Louise Provost
THE CAÑON OF THE YELLOWSTONE A Poem.	Mildred I. McNeal
THE VANDERDONCK SANDBANK A Story.	Edith Robinson <i>Author of "A Monk's Confession and His Wife,"</i>
AN UNWILLING DELILAH A Story.	Ella Middleton Tybout <i>Author of "The Art that Van- quished Babylon," "Anno- of Pokeness," etc.</i>
MORNING ON THE PRAIRIES A Poem.	Ernest Raymond Simon
THE ANGEL A Poem.	Fullerton L. Waldo
WALNUTS AND WINE	

Summer • AUGUST, 1903 • Fiction

LIPPINCOTTS

MONTHLY
MAGAZINE

COMPLETE NOVEL

The Green Dragon

BY ELIZABETH DUER

Seven Short Stories By

MARION HARLAND
CHURCHILL WILLIAMS
WILLIAM LE QUEUX
ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT
EDWARD BOLTWOOD
CLINTON DANGERFIELD
E. SPENCE DE PUE

FATHER KNEIPP AND HIS CURE

BY MAUD HOWE

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO

227-231 SOUTH SIXTH ST
PHILADELPHIA

LONDON, 5 HENRIETTA ST., COVENT GARDEN
PARIS, BRENTANO'S, 12 AVENUE DE L'OPERA

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for August, 1903

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMING FEATURES ON PAGES 2, 3, AND 4

THE GREEN DRAGON A COMPLETE NOVEL.	Elizabeth Duer
THE SWIMMER A Poem.	Fullerton L. Waldo
FATHER KNEIPP AND HIS CURE Through an American Patient's Eyes, with Anecdotes of Emperor William.	Maud Howe
WOOD VOICES A Poem.	Robert Gilbert Welsh
THE SEVENTEENTH OF AUGUST, 1844 A Story.	Marion Harland <i>Author of "His Great Son," "A Gallant Fight," etc.</i>
THE SIREN A Story.	Churchill Williams <i>Author of "The Captain," "J. Deedin, Bar," etc.</i>
AT THE CLOSE OF DAY A Poem.	Ingram Crockett
THE MAN WITH THE BLACK SPECTACLES A Story.	William Le Queux <i>Author of "The Sign of the Seven Sins," etc.</i>
CUPID IN THE HORSE-CAMP A Story.	Edward Boltwood
SONG FOR A SUMMER TWILIGHT A Poem.	Clinton Scollard
FOR A' THAT A Story.	Clinton Dangerfield
THE OFFENDING EYE A Story.	Ella Middleton Tybout <i>Author of "Avonlea of Pen- town," "An Unwilling Dol- lah," "The Art that Fanned ed Balaam," etc.</i>
THE VAGABOND ROAD A Poem.	Dora Read Goodale
ANOTHER MAN'S EXCUSES A Story.	E. Spence de Pue
WALNUTS AND WINE	

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE is published monthly. Subscription, \$2.50 a year; 25 cents a number. Booksellers, Postmasters, and Subscription Agencies receive subscriptions. Subscribers may send to Post Office or Express Money-Orders, or in bank checks, drafts, or cash in registered letters. Money forwarded in letters is at the risk of the sender. Current numbers may be obtained from any News-dealer. Back numbers can be secured from the Publishers.

All rights reserved. Copyright, 1903, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.

LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY
MAGAZINE

COMPLETE NOVEL

BY

Burton Egbert Stevenson

The Blade That Won

—
AVOWALS

GEORGE MOORE'S

NEW SERIES OF "CONFESSIONS"

—
SHORT STORIES BY

SEUMAS MACMANUS

MARY MOSS

JOSEPHINE DIXON

ALBERTINE CRANDALL

C. YARNALL ABBOTT

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO

227-231 SOUTH SIXTH ST
PHILADELPHIA

LONDON: 5, Henrietta St., Covent Garden
PARIS: BRENTANO'S, 37, Avenue de l'Opéra

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for September, 1903

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMING FEATURES ON PAGE 2

THE BLADE THAT WON A TALE OF THE MIDL. A COMPLETE NOVEL.	Burton Egbert Stevenson <i>Author of "At Odds with the Regent," etc.</i>	25
AVOWALS Being the first of a new series of "Confessions of a Young Man."	George Moore <i>Author of "The Untold Story," "Evelyn Innes," etc.</i>	34
FIRE WEED A Poem.	Henrietta R. Eliot	35
MISS ATHERTON'S WANDERJAHR A Story.	Mary Moss <i>Author of "Fruit Out of Season," "Julian Melodrama," etc.</i>	35
HOW MISS TURKINGTON DID NOT SEE QUEEN VICTORIA A Story.	Seumas MacManus <i>Author of "The Leader's Road to Donegal," "The Biscuit-bell Fiddle," etc.</i>	36
THE SEA AT NOON A Poem.	Maurice Francis Egan	36
THE BRIBING OF THE SENATOR A Story.	Josephine Dixon	36
THREE LETTERS AND A NOTE A Story.	Albertine Crandall	37
SUMMER IN THE SOUTH A Poem.	Paul Laurence Dunbar	37
REBIRTH A Poem.	Charles Hanson Towne	37
THE MENDACITY OF MR. RIGGS A Story.	C. Yarnall Abbott	37
FRIENDSHIP A Poem.	Marion Pelton Guild	38
WALNUTS AND WINE		28

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE is published monthly. Subscription, \$2.50 a year, 25 cents a number. Sellers, Postmasters, and Subscription Agencies receive subscriptions. Subscribers may remit in three or Express Money-Orders, or in bank checks, drafts, or cash in registered letters. Money sent in letters is at the risk of the sender. Current numbers may be obtained from any News-dealer. Back numbers can be secured from the Publishers.

rights reserved. Copyright, 1903, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.

OCTOBER, 1903

LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

FREDERIC REDDALE'S

Complete Novel

An Heir to Millions

Six Select Short Stories By

BEULAH MARIE DIX

ALGERNON ROYSE

PHOEBE LYDE

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

ALFRED STODDART

GEORGE JONES

Papers of Current Interest

GEORGE MOORE'S "AVOWALS" II.

AGNES REPLIER'S "THE TOURIST"

MAUD HOWE'S LEO XIII.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO

227-231 SOUTH SIXTH ST
PHILADELPHIA

LONDON: 5, HENRIETTA ST., COVENT GARDEN
PARIS: BRENTANO'S, 37 AVENUE DE L'OPERA

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for October, 1903

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMING FEATURES ON PAGE 2

AN HEIR TO MILLIONS A COMPLETE NOVEL.	Frederic Reddall <i>Author of "The Old Man,"</i>	21
THE TOURIST	Agnes Repplier <i>Author of "The French Sketches," etc.</i>	41
ST. PETER'S A Poem.	Edith M. Thomas	41
THE RETURN A Story.	Beulah Marie Dix <i>Author of "The Making of Christopher Inverary," etc.</i>	41
VERSELET A Quatrain.	John Daw	43
WAY DOWN IN MAINE A Poem.	Florence A. Jones	43
A PRESENTATION TO LEO THE THIRTEENTH And Other Roman Notes.	Maud Howe	43
THE WEAR AND TEAR A Quatrain.	Carrie Blake Morgan	46
THE ADVENTURES OF AMARYLLIS A Charleston, S. C., Story.	Phæbe Lyde	46
AVOWALS Being the second of a new series of "Confessions of a Young Man."	George Moore <i>Author of "The Illustrated Field," "The Fiction Lover," etc.</i>	46
GOOD-BY A Poem.	Ingram Crockett	48
THE LIGHTWEIGHT SADDLE CLASS A Story.	Alfred Stoddart	48
THE TEMPLE IN THE FIELD A Poem.	Mildred I. McNeal	49
THE DAY'S DISDAIN A Story.	George Jones	49
THE TWO GENERALS A Poem.	Sara C. F. Hallowell	50
THE PRISON-HOUSE A Story.	Algernon Boyesen	51
ART A Poem.	Aloysius Coll	51
THE COOK AT CONLEY'S A Story.	Karl Edwin Harriman	57
PARTNERSHIP A Poem.	Harold MacGrath	57
WALNUTS AND WINE		57

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE is published monthly. Subscription, \$2.50 a year; 25 cents a number. Booksellers, Postmasters, and Subscription Agencies receive subscriptions. Subscribers may remit by Post Office or Express Money-Orders, or in bank checks, drafts, or cash in registered letters. Money forwarded in letters is at the risk of the sender. Current numbers may be obtained from any News dealer. Back numbers can be secured from the Publishers.

All rights reserved. Copyright, 1903, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.



LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Complete Novel A House Divided

BY
ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT

Short Stories By
FRANCIS HOWARD WILLIAMS
RALPH HENRY BARBOUR
JEAN D. HALLOWELL
JUDITH UNDERWOOD
ELEANOR L. STUART
CLINTON DANGERFIELD

Papers Up-to-Date

AVOWALS. Paper III.

By GEORGE MOORE

A ROYAL INTERVIEW

By MAUD HOWE

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO

227-231 SOUTH SIXTH ST
PHILADELPHIA

LONDON: 5, HENDRIETTA ST., COVENT GARDEN
PARIS: BRETAGNOL'S, 37 AVENUE DE L'OPERA

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for November, 1903

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMING FEATURES ON PAGES 2, 3, AND 4

A HOUSE DIVIDED	Ella Middleton Tybout
A COMPLETE NOVEL.	
OPPORTUNITY	Blanche Trennor Heath
A Poem.	
A ROYAL INTERVIEW WITH ITALY'S QUEEN	Maud Howe
	<i>Author of "A Newport Agnollette," etc.</i>
QUÆRITUR	Mary Teresa Waggaman
A Quatrain.	
THE GIRL WITH THE BANJO	Jean D. Hallowell
A Story.	
WEAPONS	Meribah Philbrick Reed
A Poem.	
THE MAN IN THE TOWER	Francis Howard Williams
A Story.	<i>Author of "The First Flower and Other Poems," "Atman," etc.</i>
LOW-LIE-DOWN	Madison Cawein
A Poem.	
AVOWALS	George Moore
Being the third of a new series of "Confessions of a Young Man."	<i>Author of "The Untilled Field," "Evelyn Jones," etc.</i>
THE INVITATION	Marie Van Vorst
A Poem.	
AT THE CROWN AND SCEPTRE	Ralph Henry Barbour
A Story.	<i>Author of "The Land of Jew"</i>
ONE WAY OF LOOKING AT IT	Frank Preston Smart
A Poem.	
ONE YEAR IN NAMENIA	Judith Underwood
A Story.	
AUTUMN	Col. Kentucky
A Poem.	
THE BROTHERS IMPLACABLE	Eleanor L. Stuart
A Story.	
HOW COULD I KNOW?	H. Talbot Kummer
A Poem.	
HIRAM MATHEWS'S MONUMENT	Clinton Dangerfield
A Story.	
JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER	Florence Earle Coates
A Poem.	
WALNUTS AND WINE	

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE is published monthly. Subscription, \$4.50 a year; 25 cents a number. Booksellers, Postmasters, and Subscription Agencies receive subscriptions. Subscribers may remit by Post Office or Express Money-Orders, or in bank checks, drafts, or cash in registered letters. Money forwarded in letters is at the risk of the sender. Current numbers may be obtained from any News dealer. Back numbers can be secured from the Publishers.

All rights reserved. Copyright, 1903, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.

LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY
MAGAZINE

Complete Novel
*THE FASCINATING
OF MR. SAVAGE*

By HELEN MILECETE

Eight Strong Short Stories:

MRS. A. L. WISTER
GUY WETMORE CARRYL
JEROME CASE BULL
ELIZABETH KNIGHT TOMPKINS
CLINTON DANGERFIELD
ALFRED SUTRO
MARY AND ROSALIE DAWSON
TRYNTJE DUBOIS

"AVOWALS." PART FOUR

By GEORGE MOORE

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO

237-241 SOUTH SIXTH ST.
PHILADELPHIA

LONDON: 5, Henrietta St., Covent Garden
PARIS: BRENTANO'S, 27 Avenue de l'Opera

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for December, 1903

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMING FEATURES ON PAGES 2, 3, AND 4

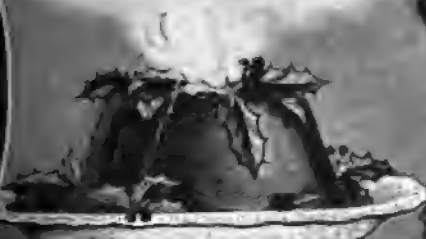
THE FASCINATING OF MR. SAVAGE A COMPLETE NOVEL.	Helen Millicete <i>Author of "A Detached Person," "Girl of the North," etc.</i>
AVOWALS Being the fourth of a new series of "Confessions of a Young Man."	George Moore <i>Author of "The Untilled Field," "Evelyn Innes," etc.</i>
THE COAT AT THE FURRIER'S A Story in Letters by Ludwig Fulda.	Translated by Mrs. A. L. Wislizenus
THE REWARD OF VIRTUE A Story.	Guy Wetmore Carryl <i>Author of "Zut, and Other Romances."</i>
TWO NURSES A Poem.	Agnes Lee
A REDWOOD SANTA CLAUS A Story.	Jerome Case Bull
A GIFT A Poem.	Helen M. Richardson
DEATH AND LIFE A Story.	Clinton Dangerfield
WIND AND SNOW A Poem.	Minna Irving
HIS HOUR OF GREATNESS A Story.	Elizabeth Knight Tompkins <i>Author of "Her Master," "Things that Count," "Fairy and Barbara," etc.</i>
THE BREAD ON THE WATERS A Story.	Alfred Sutro <i>Author of "The Curve of Woman," "Women in Love," etc.</i>
A CHRISTMAS FOLK-SONG A Poem.	Lizette Woodworth Reese
THE ADMONITION OF THE STAR A Poem.	Susie M. Best
"HIS WIFE" A Story.	Tryntje Dubois
A BALLAD OF THE NATIVITY A Poem.	Charles Hanson Towne
THE PASTRY-KNIFE PASS-OVER A Story.	Mary and Rosalie Dawson
WALNUTS AND WINE	

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE is published monthly. Subscription, \$4.50 a year; 35 cents a number. Booksellers, Postmasters, and Subscription Agencies receive subscriptions. Subscribers may send by Post Office or Express Money-Orders, or in bank checks, drafts, or cash in registered letters. Money forwarded in letters is at the risk of the sender. Current numbers may be obtained from any Newsdealer. Back numbers can be secured from the Publishers.

All rights reserved. Copyright, 1903, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.

Libby's

Christmas



Libby's Plum Pudding

makes any Christmas Dinner complete for it is made after an old English recipe that gives it a delicate flavor, a delightful aroma, often imitated, but never equaled. Always ready to serve and delicious to eat. Ask your grocer for it, and for

Libby's (Natural Flavor) Food Products

Wafer Sliced Dried Beef, Corned Beef Hash, Extract of Beef, Vienna Sausage, Boneless Chicken, Potted Ham, Concentrated Soups, Etc.

Our booklet, "How to Make Good Things to Eat," sent free.
Send five two cent stamps for Libby's big Atlas of the World.

Libby, McNeill & Libby
Chicago



The Asking Price

of the

KNABE PIANO

is

Its Selling Price

3/4 Knabe Piano is a one-price instrument. There is no room for bargaining where it is concerned. There is nothing of the kind in its make-up, and none in its sale.

It is the highest-grade instrument made, and brings the best price.

Write for Booklet

WM. KNABE & CO.

New York Baltimore Washington

Miss some of the sweet things
in life - but don't miss
the pleasures of a box of

Stuyler's



863 BROADWAY,

betw. 17th and 18th Sts.

508 FIFTH AVE.

betw. 42nd and 43rd Sts.

21 W. 42nd ST.

near 5th Ave.

150 BROADWAY,

cor Liberty St.

ANDIES sent everywhere by Mail or Express.



Pictures, perfume, lace
paper and cardboard only
add to the selling price
and do not improve the
soap. Ivory Soap is put
up in a plain, unpreten-
tious wrapper, but it is
pure soap.

IT FLO

W. C. DIANOS have been es
system of net

AUG 12 1945

